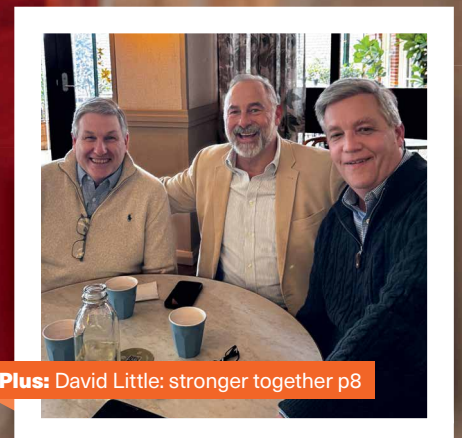


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**TRUSS TALK: ROOF
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PUBLISHING DATA

Publisher

Timber Media Australasia
query@timbertradernews.com

Editor

TTN Editorial team
editor@timbertradernews.com

Editorial Contributors

Paul Davis, George Dolezal, Kersten Gentle,
Donyale Harrison, Jason Howes, Afzal Laphir,
Peter Maguire, Campbell McInnes,
Rina McLaughlin, Chris Parker, Michael Smith,
Vicki Stableford and Simon Williamson

Art Director

Julitta Overdijk
julittao@ttnews.com.au

Sales and Advertising Director

Campbell McInnes
campbellm@ttnews.com.au
Mob: 0406 223 007

Accounting & Corporate Director

Chris Parker
cparker@ttnews.com.au



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Timber Media Australasia Pty Ltd

ABN: 50 626 345 088
PO Box 3001, Maraylya NSW 2765

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Australia, Spec Frame LVL.
Courtesy ITI Australia.

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(L to R): Campbell McInnes,
David Little and Chris Parker.

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Campbell McInnes and Chris Parker

Publisher's note

This issue's cover feature, starting on page 28, traces how ITI Australia became one of the country's top four suppliers of Engineered Wood Products. It's a story less about a single product launch and more about a deliberate, decades-long strategy.

Since partnering with Metsä in 2018, ITI has built its EWP business step by step, choosing quality European product over cheaper alternatives, then developing its own Spec range through 18 months of rigorous testing and auditing before bringing it to market. CEO Germano Tomassetti and EWP Category Manager Hayden Slatter speak candidly about the compliance work customers rarely see, and why it matters so much in a structural product category.

What emerges is a picture of a business built on patience rather than shortcuts: investing in people, testing, traceability and single-source solutions ahead of demand, so that when the market shifted towards engineered timber, ITI was ready.

It's a timely read for anyone thinking about where supply chain trust really comes from. Turn to page 28 to read the full story.

We would like to say a very special thank you to our amazing creative art and graphic designer, Julitta Overdijk. Julitta has been with *Timber Trader News* since

April 2016 and is well known to our regular advertisers and contributors who rely on her meticulous work to check all their 'artwork elements,' and review images from a creative perspective. She has a wealth of knowledge, and we have always relied on her eagle eye to spot the little details that so easily slip past the rest of us. Julitta has been wonderful to work with, and we will miss her sense of humour, creative-flair and positive contribution. While Julitta is moving on to the next chapter of her life, she will remain in contact with us and provide support to her replacement, Jennifer Aubrey, whom we will introduce in the next issue. Campbell, Chris and the rest of the TTN team wish her every success and happiness with what comes next.

Turn to page 42 and delve into global shipping volatility, with Middle East disruptions, rising fuel costs, port congestion and fluctuating freight rates impacting Australian supply chains. Proactive procurement, earlier bookings and flexible planning remain essential through 2026.

After a three-year absence, the New Zealand Timber Design Awards have returned, and Michael Smith provides a comprehensive review of the winners. These include the Supreme Award, People's Choice Award, Residential Design Award, Multi-Unit Design Award and Commercial & Industry Building Design Award, to name just a few. It is very pleasing to note several of the winners have previously featured in *Timber Trader News*. Thanks to Michael and his connections within the New Zealand timber industry.

Commencing on page 36, timber handling is easy to overlook, until it isn't. This issue's editorial looks at how Hubtex's Phoenix side-loader is changing the way Australian timber yards move product, through Bruce Peatman, General Manager of Hubtex Australia.

From configurations built around timber's odd lengths and flexible packs, to narrower aisles, taller racking and smarter guidance technology, the Phoenix story is really about squeezing more value from every square metre while cutting down on costly product damage. With roughly 400 units now working

across the country, it's a machine that's become part of daily operations for many yards.

It's a practical look at how equipment choices ripple through a whole business, and well worth the read.

David Little's eight-year tenure reflects an industry body transformed through amalgamation, stronger governance and a continued focus on advocacy, training and independent businesses. His departure in December this year marks the end of an important chapter, while his concerns around regulation, succession and industry disruption highlight the challenges facing the sector ahead.

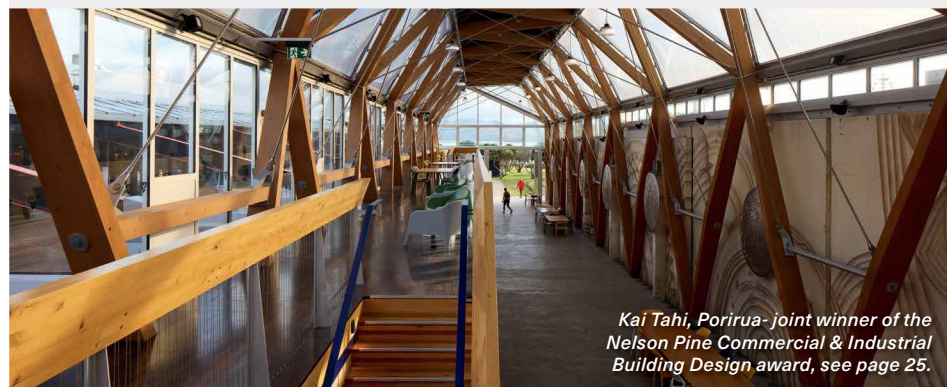
In the next edition of *Timber Trader News*, we will reveal a new product from Tasman KB, including specifications, sizes and availability in a special feature. We cannot say too much just yet, but the wait will be worthwhile.

In his 'Timber Noggins' column, principal engineer George Dolezal takes us on a journey to consider the limits and asks the question: how close should you go? This thought-provoking article explores suggested limits and provides practical answers. George also shows where you can make savings and safely push the limits.

We would also like to acknowledge outgoing TFPA CEO, Nick Steel. Nick has been an absolute warrior for Tasmanian forestry, guiding many politicians and contributing consistently to our Association News. 'Managed regrowth' was a memorable piece. Nick is also regularly published in our sister publication, *Timber and Forestry Enews*. The incoming CEO is Drew Freeman – a big welcome to you, Drew.

FTMA National Safety Council Chair Simon Williamson takes a close look at drug and alcohol use in the timber industry and what you should be aware of, the procedures you should have in place and the actions you need to take should an incident occur.

Structural engineer Paul Davis takes us through his methodology for investigating roof structures and some of the leading causes of issues ranging from minor problems through to catastrophic failures resulting in collapses. With his usual sense of humour and grounded approach, Paul provides a 101 guide of the engineering review process. **T**



Kai Tahi, Porirua- joint winner of the Nelson Pine Commercial & Industrial Building Design award, see page 25.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2026

FORESTRY AUSTRALIA SYMPOSIUM

OCTOBER 7-9: Rex Hotel, Canberra

This Symposium will explore how the forestry sector can articulate and share its values and engage constructively with diverse audiences and stakeholders including local communities, traditional owners, politicians, policymakers, media and the wider public. **For more information visit www.forestry.org.au**

TIMBER DESIGN AWARDS

Preparing to celebrate the best in Timber Innovation

OCTOBER 21: Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

140 George Street, The Rocks
Now in its 27th year, the awards continue to showcase the remarkable versatility of timber while celebrating the architects, designers, engineers, builders and manufacturers who are redefining the possibilities of building with wood. **timberdesignawards.com.au**

SA & WA TIMBER & HARDWARE INDUSTRY AWARDS

OCTOBER 30: National wine centre, Adelaide 6.30pm – 11.30pm

Join NTHA to celebrate the best SA & WA timber and hardware night of nights.

Nominations close: 1st September

Ticket sales close: 14th October

For more information contact Thalia at events@ntha.com.au

NOVEMBER 2026

SIM-PAC SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS

NOVEMBER 18: Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Sydney.

The Awards recognise practical leadership in decarbonisation, circular economy, and sustainable industrial practice across the Asia-Pacific region.

Further information will be available soon on the Awards website www.sim-pac.live/2026-awards

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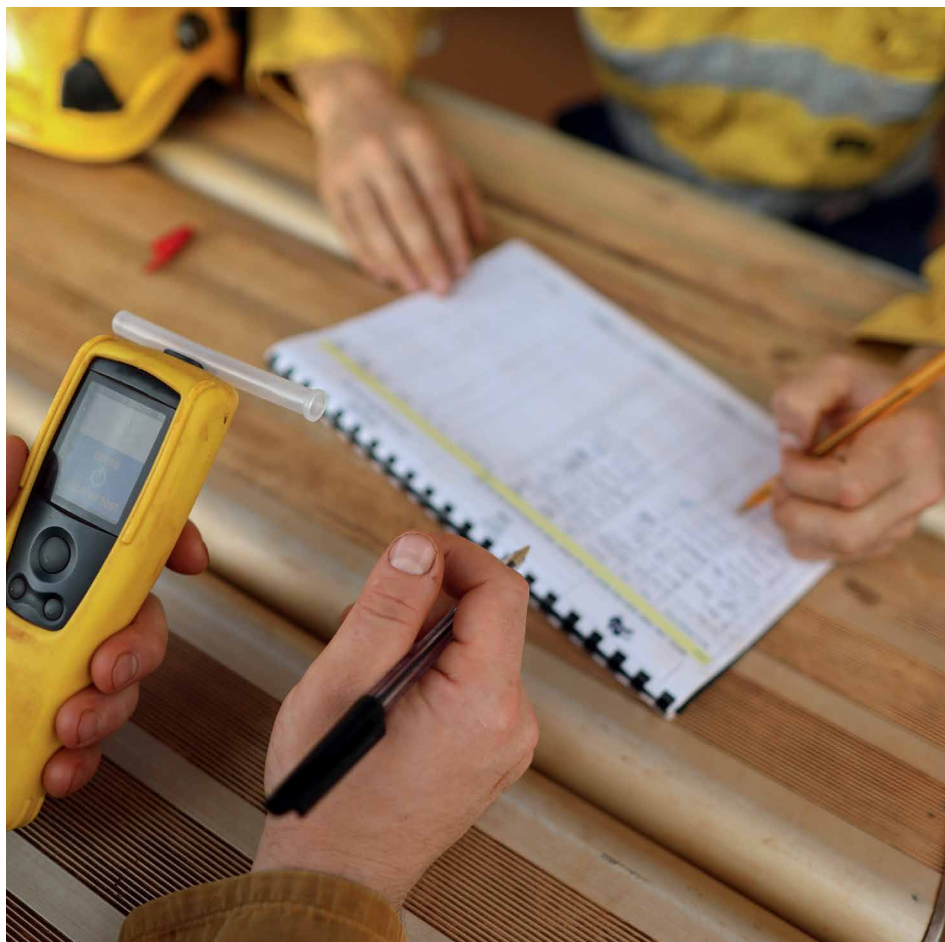




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Drug and alcohol use in Australian manufacturing



A timber frame and truss industry perspective. **By Simon Williamson**

Australian manufacturing has never been risk-free, but the timber frame and truss sector carries a particular combination of hazards that makes drug and alcohol use a serious workplace safety issue rather than an abstract policy concern. Between docking saws, automated nail plate presses, truss jigs, cranes, forklifts, and constant manual handling, a moment of impaired judgement can result in serious consequences.

Understanding why our industry is exposed, and what can realistically be done about it, matters to every frame and truss plant manager, supervisor, and worker in the country.

The National Drug Strategy Household Survey has independently identified manufacturing as one of the industries with the highest rates of long-term high-risk

alcohol consumption in Australia, a pattern that has held steady across two decades of data collection.

Workers in trade occupations, which include qualified positions found in frame and truss production, such as wood machinists, report the highest rate of illicit drug use of any occupational group in Australia, at around 1 in 4.

The Alcohol and Drug Foundation (ADF) puts the scale of the problem in sharp context. Among Australian workers who used alcohol or illicit drugs in the past 12 months, 1 in 37 reported working while under the influence of alcohol, and 1 in 9 reported working while under the influence of illicit drugs such as methamphetamine, cannabis or opioids.

The ADF also links use directly to

absenteeism as roughly 1 in 22 workers missed at least a day of work in the preceding three months because of alcohol or drug use.

Importantly, the ADF also notes about 30% of Australian workers report being personally affected by a co-worker's alcohol or drug use, through involvement in an accident or near miss, reduced ability to do their own job safely or having to cover a co-worker's days off.

The financial and human cost is substantial. Alcohol and other drugs contribute to around 11% of workplace accidents and injuries nationally. Alcohol-related time off costing Australian workplaces approximately \$3.6 billion a year, and illicit drug use adding a further \$1.5 billion annually in workplace costs.

On a frame or truss production line, where workers operate saws, presses, and overhead cranes and where tasks are often sequential and interdependent, one impaired worker can put an entire crew at risk of catastrophic harm.

There are several features of the timber frame and truss sector that increase the risk profile beyond that of generic manufacturing. These include:

Machinery interaction is constant, not occasional

Unlike some manufacturing roles where operators monitor automated lines from a distance, frame and truss production typically involves hands-on interaction with saws, presses, and cranes throughout a shift.

Physical strain drives self-medication

Repetitive lifting of timber and manoeuvring frames and trusses can be physically taxing, and chronic pain from this kind of work is a recognised driver of both problematic alcohol use and, in some cases, misuse of prescription or non-prescribed painkillers to get through a shift.

Piece-rate and production-target cultures

Many plants run on production targets tied to builder deadlines. This can create pressure to keep working through fatigue or discomfort and can also foster an after-hours drinking culture as a release valve.

“Younger, male-dominated crews are statistically more likely to normalise risky drinking and casual drug use as part of workplace culture.”

Workforce demographics

Younger, male-dominated crews are statistically more likely to normalise risky drinking and casual drug use as part of workplace culture.

The ADF is also explicit that once-off or random drug testing alone has been shown to be less effective than a comprehensive, well-communicated policy reinforcing that testing should support a broader strategy rather than substitute for one.

To mitigate these risks, there needs to be a proactive approach to alcohol and illicit drug use in the workplace, incorporating clear

policies, robust testing programs, education and awareness.

Alcohol and other drug policies should be written in plain language, be implemented with worker consultation and consistently enforced.

Managers and supervisors should receive training to help them recognise signs of impairment early, rather than in the aftermath once an incident has occurred.

Workers should be provided with access to genuine support, not just punitive consequences. Only around 1 in 6 workers currently report having access to alcohol & other drugs education, leaving a wide gap for

referral pathways to counselling or treatment.

Employers should, where practical, address the physical and cultural drivers, including manual handling improvements to reduce chronic pain, realistic production scheduling, and shifting site culture away from drinking as the default social outlet.

For frame and truss operations, drug and alcohol use isn't a peripheral HR issue. It sits directly alongside machine guarding and manual handling as a core safety risk, shaped by the specific physical demands, culture, and workforce profile of the industry. Plants that treat drug and alcohol management as seriously as saw safety, backed by clear policy, trained supervisors, and real support pathways, are the ones most likely to keep both their people safe and their production targets intact.

Members can contact the FTMA for further information. **T**



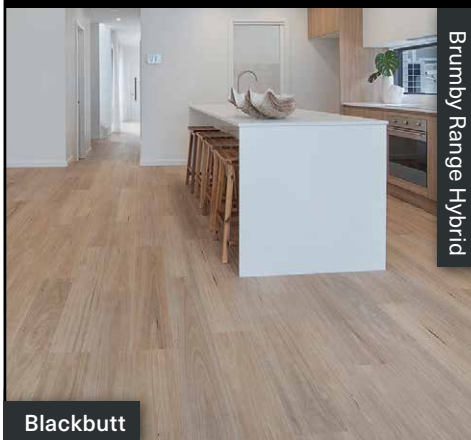
Simon Williamson Chair - Frame & Truss National Safety Council NSC provides WHS related networking, knowledge sharing, collaboration & advocacy opportunities in our industry.

**FTMA FRAME & TRUSS
NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL**



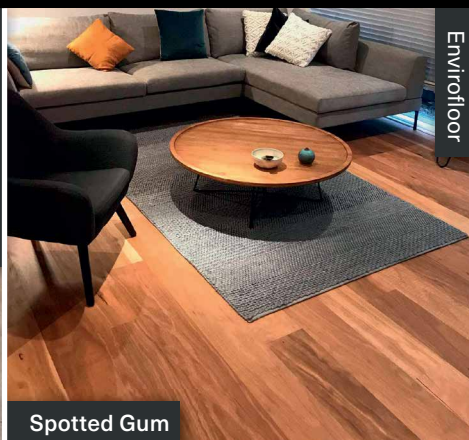
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“Stronger together”

David Little on eight years steering NTHA through amalgamation, compliance and change. **By Campbell McInnes**

As David Little prepares to step down and relocate to Hong Kong, the outgoing NTHA CEO reflects candidly on the TABMA merger, the regulatory burden crushing small businesses, the traineeships he loves most, and the industry threat he says isn't getting enough attention.

When David Little steps down as Chief Executive Officer of the National Timber & Hardware Association at the end of the year, he will close out almost eight years in the role and close a chapter that began under a different name entirely. David has led the organisation through its transformation from TABMA into NTHA, following the amalgamation with the Australian Hardware Association, and has become one of the most recognised advocates for Australia's independent timber, hardware and building supplies sector.

The news of his departure, confirmed on 10 August in an official release from NTHA, is straightforward enough: David is relocating to Hong Kong with his family, and will remain in the role over coming months to ensure a smooth handover while the Board runs its search for a successor. But behind that announcement is a much richer story, of a merger that reshaped an entire industry body, of quiet wins in governance that members rarely see, and of a genuine, unfiltered passion for the young trainees who pass through NTHA's programs every year.

Campbell McInnes, representing both Timber & Forestry eNews and Timber Trader News, sat down with David for an exclusive, wide-ranging conversation ahead of his exit, covering everything from the human side of amalgamation to his biggest regret, his fears

for the next generation of industry leadership, and what he'll miss most.

A CHAPTER – NOT A RETIREMENT

For Little, the timing of his exit is as much personal as professional. “When I first took on the role, I felt the leadership of an association should be refreshed from time to time to keep the energy and new ideas coming,” he says. “After nearly eight years, the timing feels right.”

The move to Hong Kong is a family decision as much as a career one. “My wife and I also have a unique opportunity to experience life in Hong Kong, and the kids are now just about old enough to manage without us nearby, at least in theory,” he says. “It's one of those opportunities that may not come around again.”

He is quick to reject any suggestion this is a wind-down. “I see it as a new chapter, certainly not retirement, I'm far too young,” he says. His immediate plans are modest: get settled, make sure family back in Australia are okay, and properly experience his new city before deciding what comes next. “I don't have a fixed career plan, but I'm certainly open to doing something interesting when the right opportunity comes along.”

In the meantime, he is determined to leave nothing undone. Member services around employment, safety and compliance remain a priority. “For a small business, staying



Above: David Little, CEO, National Timber & Hardware Association (NTHA).

compliant across every area has become almost impossible,” he notes. With a couple of projects in train that should land before year's end. Above all, he wants a clean handover. “I also want to leave the Board, the team and the incoming CEO with a clean handover, clear priorities and no surprises.”

THE HUMAN SIDE OF A MERGER

David's tenure will be defined, in large part, by the amalgamation that created NTHA, bringing together TABMA and the Australian Hardware Association under one banner. It is, he says, a far harder undertaking than people assume. “The mechanics of an amalgamation are much easier than the human side,” David advised. “You're bringing together two histories, two sets of loyalties and different expectations about what the organisation should be.”

He believes the broader case for consolidation across the industry body landscape remains strong and isn't shy about naming the cost of fragmentation. “Our industry still has overlaps, duplication of effort and unnecessary cost,” he says. “We've even seen different parts of the timber sector arguing against each other, which must bring

Good governance makes everything else happen.



Above left: David Little with NTHA Queensland award winners 2026. **Above right:** David Little with NTHA Victoria & Tasmanian award winners 2026.

ALL PHOTOS: COURTESY NTHA



Above left: David with some of the NTHA team from Left to Right: Darren Hooper, Alicia Langfield, Jodie Crow, Alissa Mizon, Kim Jones, Tahlia Bellotti, Christine Bannister, Melissa Clark and David Little.

a smile to the steel industry's face."

Establishing a new identity, he says, has been the hardest and longest part of the job. "Both names had a long history, so the new name was never going to become familiar overnight. That work is continuing."

Asked what he'd do differently with hindsight, David doesn't hesitate: communication, earlier and heavier. "I would've invested earlier and much more heavily in communication around the new organisation, particularly the NTHA name," he says, crediting both former Boards for making the process workable. "We were very fortunate that both Boards were absolutely committed to the amalgamation. They worked hard with their respective members and made the process much easier for my team."

THE ACHIEVEMENT MEMBERS NEVER SEE

Pressed on what he's proudest of, David skips past the campaigns and headline announcements altogether. "I'm proudest of the part members generally don't see, building a professionally managed, well-governed national organisation with good people and sound systems behind it," he says. "Campaigns, events and announcements receive the attention, while good governance and disciplined management generally don't. But they're what allow everything else to happen."

It's a theme he returns to often, the unglamorous groundwork behind a functioning association. But it's a different part of the job entirely that clearly lights him up. "My absolute favourite part of the job is seeing the new trainees and apprentices our GTO and RTO (Group Training Organisation / Registered Training Organisation) bring into the industry," he says. "It's what attracted me to the role in the first place."

THE REGULATORY BURDEN: "I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW HOW THEY DO IT"

If there's a single issue that has frustrated David more than any other, it's the accumulating weight of regulation on small operators. "My biggest disappointment is that we haven't been able to do more to help small businesses deal with the extraordinary pace of regulatory and compliance change," he says.

He rattles off the scale of it without prompting, employment law, workplace safety, privacy, environmental claims, product compliance and reporting obligations, all shifting at once, and usually landing on one desk. "In a small business, responsibility for understanding and implementing those changes often falls directly on the owner or manager, on top of running the business. I honestly don't know how they do it."

His frustration isn't with regulation itself, but with how it's imposed. "It isn't about opposing sensible regulation. It's about making sure businesses can realistically understand and implement it," he says, adding pointedly that "the current Federal Government has added to that burden at a pace I haven't experienced before."

AN INDUSTRY TRANSFORMED, AND A THREAT FLYING UNDER THE RADAR

Asked to sum up how the sector has changed since he started, David paints a picture of an industry growing up fast. "It has become more consolidated, more sophisticated and much faster-moving," he explains. "Independent businesses are using better systems, data and digital tools, while their customers expect quicker service, more information and greater certainty."

The trade-off, he says, is real pressure. "Margins are tighter, finding good people is harder and the compliance burden is much heavier." What hasn't changed, he insists, is what actually wins business. "It remains a relationship business. Trust, service, product knowledge and local connections are still the things that allow independents to compete successfully."

David's biggest concern for the next five years isn't the skills shortage everyone already talks about, it's who replaces the people at the top. "Business succession and the next generation of leadership," he says without hesitation. "We talk a lot about the skills shortage, but we also need the next generation of owners, managers and experienced technical people."

He points to the generational nature of many independent businesses, and the risk of that knowledge simply disappearing. "If younger people can't see an attractive future in owning or managing these businesses, we risk losing good companies, valuable knowledge and competition, particularly in local and regional markets. We need deliberate pathways into leadership and ownership, not just entry-level jobs."

He also flags a newer, less visible disruption bearing down on the trade sector. "I think disruption to the trade area is upon us, with direct-from-factory-to-site operations opening regularly now, cutting out our members," he says. "This unregulated and mostly invisible new sector concerns me greatly."

ADVICE FOR THE NEXT CEO

With recruitment for his successor now underway, David's advice is pragmatic. "Listen first and understand what members are actually experiencing. Get the data. Governments respond best to evidence >>

and real examples," he says. "Make sure you have a solution, not just a list of complaints, and engage with all industry stakeholders wherever you can. We're stronger together."

He notes that members generally hold their own against larger corporate players, particularly in trade, but believes smaller regional retailers need more protection. "Small retailers need better protection from those corporates, particularly in regional areas. Hopefully we are seeing some increases in understanding by Government of the absolute need for the independents."

On unfinished business, David is candid that the regulatory fight is generational, not something any one CEO will finish. "The cumulative impact of regulation on small employers remains unfinished business. Governments need to assess the combined practical and financial effect of new requirements before they impose them," he says. "This work will never end, given the appetite for change and 'closing loopholes'; advocacy is never really finished. You make progress and then hand the baton to the next person."

WHERE THE REAL PASSION LIES: TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

Ask David about training and traineeships and the tone of the conversation shifts noticeably. It's clearly personal. "Before I took this job, I employed many TABMA trainees. It's what I fell in love with about the Association and this role," he says.

Across 17 years of involvement, he says no single graduate stands out, the stories all blend into a pattern he never tires of. "I really couldn't single out one person from the 17 years I've been involved, but I always look forward to our awards nights, where we celebrate graduation."

The pattern itself is what moves him: a young person who struggled in a classroom finding their footing somewhere else entirely. "My favourite stories typically involve a young person who didn't necessarily flourish in a classroom, gets an opportunity with a good host employer and blossoms," he says. "They may need quite a bit of help initially, but they gradually gain confidence, complete their qualification and become someone the business depends upon. Traineeships can be genuinely life-changing."

He describes graduation nights in simple, affecting terms, "the pride of the young person, their family and their employer", and explains what he sees as the real mechanism behind the model's success. "The employer receives support, and the apprentice or trainee has someone other than their boss or parent to call when things become difficult. It can genuinely change the direction of a young person's life."

Traineeships can be genuinely life changing.

Looking ahead, David is clear that training must keep moving with the industry it feeds. "Training needs to remain closely connected to real jobs and what employers actually need. Things are changing quickly, and our course content needs to keep up," he says. He also raises a subtler, generational challenge: getting young trainees to speak up when something is wrong. "Young people communicate differently, and sometimes hardly at all. Helping them speak up early and resolving training and workplace issues must remain a priority."

His parting brief for the incoming CEO on this front is specific. "We also need stronger connections with schools, parents and employers, and training that keeps pace with technology, design systems, automation and changing business practices," he says. "I'd like the incoming CEO to protect the quality of those pathways, keep the training and employment operations close to members, and continue measuring success by outcomes rather than enrolment numbers."

THE COVID CALL CENTRE NO ONE TALKS ABOUT

Asked for a moment that has genuinely stayed with him, David doesn't point to a campaign win or a boardroom milestone, he goes straight to the early days of the pandemic. "The early stages of COVID have stayed with me. Government directions were sometimes changing overnight, and members were calling because they needed practical answers: whether they could continue trading, how to keep people safe and what the latest rules meant for their staff and customers."

It reframed, for him, what an association is actually for. "Our team effectively became a translation service between government announcements and the reality of running a business," he says. "It reinforced that advocacy is important, but sometimes the greatest value an association provides is simply giving a business owner a clear answer when they need it."

WHAT HE'LL MISS, AND WHAT HE WON'T

On the personal toll of leaving, David is warm and unguarded. "I'll miss the team, the conversations with members and getting out to see businesses around the country. I'll



Above: Left to right: Campbell McInnes, David Little and Chris Parker, at a recent catch up.

also miss the awards nights and graduations, where you get to see the people and achievements behind the industry."

The relationships built along the way, he says, go well beyond the professional. "My relationships with our members, particularly those on the Boards and committees, have been very important to me personally as well as professionally. I'll really miss them all and hope we stay in touch."

And what won't he miss? True to form, he keeps it light. "There isn't much that I won't miss, really, even the Board meetings!"

A FINAL WORD

David's closing message to the industry is, fittingly, less about himself than about the businesses NTHA exists to serve. "Mostly, thank you. This is a wonderful industry, and once you get involved, it quickly becomes a passion," he says. "I've been very lucky to have such great support from the industry, the NTHA Directors and my own team. Our independent, family-owned businesses are the factory for innovation, the home of service and expertise, and must be supported and protected."

He leaves members with a simple instruction: back the incoming CEO and keep pulling in the same direction. "I'd encourage members to keep supporting their Association, get behind the incoming CEO and continue working together. Our industry has a much stronger voice when it speaks as one."

He also has a personal word of thanks for NTHA Chairman Peter Hutchison. "I want to thank our Chairman, Peter Hutchison: thank you for trusting me and for all your support over the years. You've been a fantastic Chairman over a very long period, and the Association has been extremely fortunate to have you in the role."

Stronger Together, as David puts it, isn't just a sign-off: it's the closest thing to a mission statement for the organisation he leaves behind. **T**

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Is a risk management mindset stifling innovation, flexibility and opportunity? **By Peter Maguire**

BACKGROUND

Under our Fair Work system of minimum wages and employment standards, we spend a lot of time talking about the importance of compliance with those standards – to ensure that:

- employees are receiving at least the minima that they are legally entitled to and
- employers are not vulnerable to costly underpayment claims and infringement penalties, damaging prosecutions and embarrassing publicity.

Yes, of course, compliance is important.

For decades, we have had it drilled into us that we must pay people correctly and that we must have policies and procedures to comply with legal obligations under a variety of legislation and employment instruments.

Terms like “zero tolerance” have been

used to send a message that there are no exceptions and everyone will be treated the same.

But is that the be-all and end-all?
And does it really work in practice?

OUR SYSTEM ISN'T PERFECT

The Fair Work Act, modern awards and other legislation just provide minimum standards that you must comply with but that is all they are – the minimum that you must do as an employer.

One of the problems looking at anything through the lens of compliance and risk management is that we don't open our eyes to possibilities for something that might better match the needs of our people and our business.

We are so focused on not doing the wrong thing that we don't consider what might be the best thing.

That also influences the tone of conversations that we have with our people in relation to things that happen in their lives.

If we talk in compliance terms, that can be

a disappointment at a time when the employee would value a more supportive approach from their boss, HR Department or employer.

And that can make a real difference to how the employee sees their employer and how that impacts on the employment relationship, engagement, retention and productivity.

A CASE IN POINT

Here is a story that illustrates what I am talking about here.

This was in the early 1990s before Carer's Leave was introduced.

An employee had been with their employer for five years and hadn't had a single sick day off in all that time.

He approached management about whether he could use a few days of sick leave to cover a short absence that was necessary so that he could look after the children while his wife was in hospital having essential surgery.

He was told that he would have to take annual leave because he wasn't sick and that they couldn't change the rules just for him.

He felt this was really unfair and, from that point on, he took every single day absence as a sickie that he legally could – they lost him for 8 days each year.

That refusal of a request for a little flexibility really did cost a lot more every year.

That's a case where adopting a “zero tolerance” attitude was really not a very smart thing to do.

ANOTHER CURRENT EXAMPLE

We do have carer's leave now but there are other minimum standards that are equally problematic such as Compassionate Leave.

That provides an entitlement to take up to 2 days of paid leave per occasion on the death or threat to life of a member of your immediate family or household.

Is 2 days really enough time to deal with the death of your partner or your parent or your child or your sibling?

This doesn't provide you with an entitlement to paid leave if a best mate or a good friend or a loved uncle or aunt or cousin or niece or nephew happens to die.

It doesn't cover bereavements for a boss or a subordinate or a work colleague.

It doesn't cover bereavement for a pet.

All of those situations are life events that cause us grief and which we need to process and that means we are certainly not going to be at our best in doing our job while we work through that.

So, rather than just comply with the minimum standard, would it be appropriate for you to extend a bit of flexibility by offering either extended compassionate leave or access to personal/carer's leave to support your people through those difficult times?

YOUR EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION

When I hear an employer proudly declare: "We pay award wages", my response is normally: "So you are paying your people at the lowest rate that you are legally allowed to!"

Not much of an Employer Value Proposition, is it?

If you want to give people a reason to want to work for you, you really have to offer them something more than the statutory baseline in pay and conditions, don't you?

Flexible working arrangements, whether that is in working from home or customised hours, are certainly in the mix there.

But what can you do for workers who can't do their jobs from home because they have to be physically present to do their jobs – like hospital and emergency service workers, manufacturing and construction workers, hospitality and retail workers and more?

A FEW OPTIONS

There are lots of different ways that you can provide people with something more than just the standard award wages and conditions and working arrangements that apply in so many workplaces.

For example:

- Some organisations have been successfully trialling 4-day weeks.
- One client of mine who relies on government funding for their services is

Some organisations have been successfully trialling 4-day weeks.



really limited to paying award wages but offers something extra by giving people their mandated annual shutdown off without deduction of pay or leave.

- Many awards provide the ability for an individual employee and their employer to agree to substitute another day off for a public holiday – for example, an employee of Chinese heritage might want to swap one of the statutory holidays for a day off in the lunar New Year period.
- Working parents can find it difficult to deal with childcare requirements during school holidays and might be able to better cover these if they could buy additional annual leave via a wage sacrifice arrangement if they are earning enough to cover that (or by granting them leave without pay to give them more time off each year).

- Giving people an extra day off for their birthday.
- Providing access to other benefits like financial planning and health support.
- Giving people time off for volunteering or community or ceremonial activities that have meaning for them.

These are just a few examples of what some employers are doing to provide a benefit that has meaning to their employees and what that looks like will vary from workplace to workplace.

The challenge for business owners is to consider a couple of questions:

1. "If I believe that people really are important to me and my business, what am I actually doing to make them want to stay with me?" and
2. "What can I do to make a positive difference to each of my people in their context?"

Are you ready to ask those questions of yourself?

CONCLUSION

Offering employees benefits over and above what you are obliged to by law does involve additional investment on your part.

If you can look at that in the context of it being a small price to pay to retain capable and engaged staff, that really puts that investment into context. **T**

"If I believe that people really are important to me and my business, what am I actually doing to make them want to stay with me?"

Peter Maguire is the owner and practice leader of Ridgeline HR, an award winning HRM consulting practice which he founded in 2000. Peter is an acknowledged expert in workplace relations compliance and also a high-performance leadership coach with over 40 years' experience in HRM. Ridgeline HR's byline is Helping PEOPLE in BUSINESS and that is essentially what Peter does – help business people with their people business.



Association news

TDA Timber Development Association



Andrew Dunn
TDA CEO

2026 AUSTRALIAN TIMBER DESIGN AWARDS - PREPARING TO CELEBRATE THE BEST IN TIMBER INNOVATION

From award-winning homes and commercial buildings to innovative public

architecture and bespoke timber craftsmanship, the Australian Timber Design Awards continue to recognise the projects and people shaping the future of timber design in Australia.

Now in its 27th year, the awards continue to showcase the remarkable versatility of timber while celebrating the architects, designers, engineers, builders and manufacturers who are redefining the possibilities of building with wood.

The awards have become one of the industry's most respected annual events, highlighting projects that not only demonstrate exceptional design and craftsmanship but also embrace sustainability, innovation and the growing role of timber in Australia's built environment.

The Timber Design Awards Gala Dinner will be held at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art on 21st October 2026. "The Australian Timber Design Awards continue to demonstrate how timber is transforming the way Australians design and build."

The awards recognise excellence across an extensive range of project types and the categories include:

- Residential Class 1 – New Building
- Residential Class 1 – Alteration or Addition
- Multi-Residential
- Public Building
- Commercial Building
- Interior Fitout – Residential
- Interior Fitout – Commercial & Public
- Furniture or Joinery
- Sports & Recreation
- Stand-Alone Structures

Additional honours include People's Choice and Sustainability Merit Awards, while dedicated Timber Product awards recognise excellence in the use of Australian Certified Timber and Recycled Timber.

Updated category guidelines for 2026 also incorporate education projects into either the Public Building or Commercial Building categories, depending on ownership.

Winning an Australian Timber Design Award has become one of the industry's highest accolades, with past recipients representing some of the country's most celebrated architectural projects.

Last year's Grand Prix was awarded to Archer Office for the remarkable Boot Factory redevelopment in Sydney's Bondi Junction. The project transformed a fire-damaged 1892 heritage building into a contemporary innovation hub, retaining its historic character while showcasing an exposed Australian hardwood structural system that has become central to the building's identity.

The 2024 Grand Prix recognised Bates Smart for the new Australian Embassy in Washington, D.C. The internationally acclaimed project combined security, diplomacy and Australian design excellence, featuring extensive use of locally sourced

hardwoods to create a distinctly Australian civic building on the world stage.

In 2023, the coveted Grand Prix was presented to ARM Architecture for the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall Renewal. The project demonstrated how carefully selected Australian Brush Box timber could dramatically enhance acoustics while preserving the architectural integrity of one of Australia's most recognised landmarks.

"From heritage restoration to world-class civic buildings, recent Grand Prix winners demonstrate timber's ability to deliver beauty, performance and sustainability in equal measure."

As demand for sustainable, low-carbon construction continues to grow, the Australian Timber Design Awards provide an important platform for recognising projects that lead the industry forward. They celebrate not only architectural excellence, but also the growing confidence in timber as a material capable of delivering environmental performance, structural innovation and timeless design.



Jacqui Bates - FFI
Project Manager

BUILDING A PATHWAY FOR THE FUTURE OF TIMBER FRAMING

As Australia's housing and construction sectors continue to evolve, the timber industry faces a significant opportunity to expand

the use of lightweight timber framing across a broader range of building types. However, unlocking that potential requires more than product innovation alone. It also depends on ensuring standards, compliance pathways and industry capability evolve alongside emerging construction systems and technologies.

The Future Framing Initiative (FFI) is working to address that challenge. An industry-led collaborative project managed by Forest & Wood Products Australia (FWPA), the FFI is focused on supporting the development of modern standards, clear compliance pathways and coordinated industry action to help timber construction continue to grow.

For Jacqui Bates (FFI Project Manager),



Above: 2024 Winner – Bates Smart.



Above: 2025 Winner – Boot Factory.

who has spent more than 30 years working across product development and compliance in the building industry, the initiative comes at a critical time.

Closing the gap between innovation and regulation

According to Ms Bates, the timber industry has made substantial progress over the past three decades, delivering significant advances in products, systems and manufacturing capabilities.

However, she says many of these developments are not yet fully reflected in the codes and standards relied upon by designers, builders and certifiers.

"The Future Framing Initiative is important because it aims to provide a coordinated pathway to expand the use of lightweight timber framing across all building types as housing and construction trends evolve," Ms Bates says.

By supporting the development of compliance pathways and design standards that better reflect current industry capabilities, the FFI is helping create the conditions for wider adoption of timber systems and broader market opportunities.

Reducing barriers to innovation

While innovation continues to emerge across the building industry, Ms Bates believes there are several persistent barriers that can slow adoption.

Among the most significant are uncertainty around costing and supply continuity, unclear certification pathways and the fragmented nature of the construction sector.

"Developers, builders, designers and certifiers typically prefer well-established solutions that estimators and subcontractors are familiar with, have straightforward compliance pathways, proven performance histories and require minimal additional training," she explains.

This is particularly important in an industry characterised by tight margins, demanding delivery schedules and significant project risk. Even where the technical benefits of a product or system are well understood, industry participants are often reluctant to adopt something new if it introduces additional uncertainty.

The FFI seeks to help overcome these barriers by bringing manufacturers, designers, builders, certifiers and regulators together to work towards common solutions. Greater consistency and clarity around compliance can help reduce risk, improve confidence and support the successful introduction of new products and systems.

Providing certainty throughout the building process

A key objective of the initiative is to modernise standards and compliance pathways, creating benefits across the entire building supply chain.

For designers, updated standards can provide greater flexibility and choice when specifying materials and construction systems. Builders may experience fewer approval delays and less complexity throughout project delivery, while certifiers can rely on clearer guidance regarding compliance requirements and expected performance outcomes.

Building owners benefit from greater choice, with more opportunities to live in homes built from a sustainable, renewable and naturally sourced structural material.

"When projects can be delivered with greater certainty, a broader range of construction solutions, including timber, can compete on a level playing field," Ms Bates says.

Ultimately, modernised standards and compliance pathways help all participants better understand requirements, demonstrate compliance and adopt new solutions with confidence.

Looking to the future

For Ms Bates, success over the next five to ten years would mean seeing timber construction become a mainstream option across all building types, supported by the technical capability, workforce skills and standards needed to sustain long-term growth.

She also believes the collaborative approach established through the Future Framing Initiative should continue beyond its current program of work.

"I would like to see the Future Framing Initiative continue in some form as an ongoing mechanism for industry collaboration," she says. "It can help build technical capability across the sector and ensure standards, research and related codes continue to evolve alongside industry needs."

Ultimately, Bates sees the initiative as helping create a long-term framework for industry growth, one that enables timber to be considered alongside other mainstream construction systems whenever project decisions are being made.

As the building industry continues to evolve, the Future Framing Initiative represents an important opportunity for industry stakeholders to work together, reduce barriers to innovation and ensure timber remains well positioned for the future of Australian construction.



Timber Trade Industrial Association



Brian Beecroft
TTIA CEO

DO BUSINESSES NEED TO RECORD MINOR INJURIES?

In the world of WHS, it is a regular issue raised by Members on our enquiry line. Even small injuries involving cuts and a speedy Band-Aid repair raise bigger

questions about what employers must document.

The short answer is employers should record all workplace injuries, even minor ones like cuts, scratches or minor sprains.

Recording vs reporting: understanding the difference

It's important to distinguish between:

- recording an injury (internal requirement), and
- reporting an incident to the regulator (legal notification requirement).

Not all incidents need to be reported to SafeWork NSW or the relevant safety regulator in other States. Many more should be recorded internally.

What does the law require?

Under workers' compensation legislation, employers in NSW for instance must maintain a register of injuries that is readily accessible to workers.

This register is intended to capture any workplace injury, regardless of whether it results in a compensation claim.

While the legislation does not prescribe a strict minimum level of severity, its broad scope means that, in practice, even minor injuries should be recorded.

What counts as a "minor injury"? Examples of minor injuries include:

- small cuts or abrasions,
- minor burns or bruises,
- sprains requiring only first aid,
- incidents treated with a Band-Aid or ice pack.

Even if the injury does not require medical treatment or does not result in time off work, it is still good practice to record the incident.

Why record minor injuries?

Recording minor injuries is not just about compliance; it is a key part of effective WHS management. Recording helps a business to identify recurring hazards or patterns, »

monitor workplace risks over time, take corrective action before a serious incident occurs and demonstrate due diligence if reviewed by a regulator. Employers can draw up their own injury register. It must include:

- the name of the injured worker,
- the worker's address,
- the worker's age at the time of injury,
- the worker's occupation at the time of injury,
- the industry in which the worker was engaged at the time of injury,
- the time and date of injury,
- the nature of the injury, and
- the cause of the injury.

When do you need to notify the regulator?

Most minor injuries do not need to be reported to SafeWork NSW. Notification is only required for "notifiable incidents", which include:

- a workplace death,
- a serious injury or illness (for example, injuries requiring immediate hospital treatment, serious burns, fractures or amputations),
- dangerous incidents (such as explosions, fires or uncontrolled chemical leaks).

If an incident does not meet this threshold, it does not need to be reported, but it should still be recorded.

Members in other States who are unsure of their requirements are welcome to contact TTIA for assistance (02) 9264 0011 or by email: ttia@ttia.asn.au

TTIA has the timber products industry's premier in-house IR/HR and WHS experts. If you are not already a member and would like to know more about the services we offer, check out the TTIA website – <https://ttia.asn.au> or make contact through the details above.



Nick Steel
TTFA CEO

GETTING THE BALANCE RIGHT

Housing affordability, climate change and the future of regional Tasmania are among the defining challenges facing our state. Meeting them will require practical solutions, informed by

evidence rather than ideology, and a willingness to recognise that our greatest

opportunities often sit at the intersection of environmental, social and economic outcomes.

Forest Economic Congress

That is why the recent chapter of the Forest Economic Congress was a valuable initiative, as bringing together people to share knowledge, exchange perspectives and improve understanding about the future of Tasmania's forests was worthwhile. While there will always be a range of views about forestry and forest management, the Tasmanian Forest Products Association's view is clear.

Tasmania has a legitimate, sustainable and responsible forest products industry that plays an essential role in our state's future. It's an industry that demonstrates environmental stewardship, supports regional communities and provides renewable products that will become increasingly important as Tasmania addresses housing demand and the transition to a lower-emissions economy.

That position is not based on aspiration or opinion; rather, it's backed by decades of scientific research, continual improvement, independent oversight through the Forest Practices Authority and internationally recognised forest certification. Together, these provide confidence that Tasmania's forests are managed to rigorous environmental, social and economic standards and continue to evolve as science, technology and community expectations evolve.

Tasmania's forestry model has been built on achieving balance

Balance between conservation and sustainable production. Balance between protecting our natural environment and supporting regional jobs.

Balance between meeting today's needs while safeguarding opportunities for future generations. That balance is reflected in the way our forests are managed today.

More than 53 per cent of Tasmania's forests are permanently protected, including around 87 per cent of old-growth forests. Timber production occurs within designated production forests under one of the world's most comprehensive regulatory systems. Harvested areas are regenerated in accordance with Tasmania's Forest Practices System, while independent regulation and certification ensure environmental, social and economic standards are transparent, measurable and continuously strengthened.

These outcomes are the result of decades of evidence-based policy, responsible stewardship and a commitment to continual improvement.

The benefits extend well beyond the forest and touch every corner of the state.

The forest products industry supports around 5,700 direct and indirect jobs and contributes approximately \$1.2 billion to Tasmania's economy every year. It sustains contractors, harvest and haulage businesses, transport operators, manufacturers, engineers, researchers, apprentices and hundreds of small businesses throughout regional Tasmania.

Forestry provides employment, investment and opportunities

For many communities, forestry provides long-term employment, supports local investment and creates opportunities for families to live and work in the regions they call home. The strength of regional Tasmania depends on industries that create lasting economic opportunity, while managing our natural assets responsibly.

Forestry also has an increasingly important role in helping Tasmania meet future challenges.

As we build the homes our growing population needs, timber will become even more important. It's one of the world's few renewable structural building materials, stores carbon throughout its life and can replace more emissions-intensive construction materials. Innovation across the forest products sector continues to create high-value timber products, improve resource recovery and strengthen the industry's contribution to a more sustainable economy.

At the same time, Tasmania's forests continue to provide biodiversity, protect water catchments, preserve cultural values, support recreation and tourism, and sustain landscapes that are recognised around the world.

These are not competing outcomes, but the result of a forestry system deliberately designed to deliver environmental, social and economic value together.

Like every responsible industry, Tasmania's forest products sector will continue to evolve.

New science will continue to improve environmental outcomes. Technology will strengthen productivity and sustainability, and community expectations will continue to shape best practice. Responsible industries embrace that evolution because continual improvement is fundamental to earning and maintaining public confidence.

Tasmania's future will not be secured by choosing between environmental stewardship and economic resilience. It will be secured by continuing to balance both.

That means recognising the importance of conservation alongside regional employment. It means ensuring decisions are informed by evidence and supported by robust independent regulation, and it means ➤

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- Transparency you can trust.



Why does it matter?



SCAN FOR MORE
INFORMATION

Without Origin Verified timber, merchants and builders may unknowingly purchase products that do not comply with the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Act or fail to meet the requirements of the National Construction Code.

Don't risk it. Use Origin Verified.

SMARTFRAME[®]
BY TILLING

acknowledging the important role renewable forest products will play in delivering more homes, reducing emissions and supporting prosperous regional communities.

Tasmania has spent decades building a forestry model that seeks to achieve exactly that balance.

It's a model worth continuing to strengthen, because it delivers not only for the forests we value but for the people, communities and future we all share.



David Little
NTHA CEO

DIRECT PRICE. DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY.

Members have been asking me about a new group of businesses offering building products direct from overseas manufacturers, and my own social media

feeds seem to be filling up with their advertisements.

The message is usually simple: buy direct from the factory, cut out the importer, wholesaler and merchant, and save a substantial amount on the cost of materials.

Some describe themselves as sourcing agents or procurement specialists. Others are Australian distributors connected directly to overseas factories. Some hold limited stock locally, while others assemble a project order, arrange production and deliver a container directly to the building site.

The potential offering

The products being offered extend well beyond timber. Builders and developers are being shown complete packages of windows, doors, kitchens, cabinetry, flooring, tiles, stone, bathroom products, lighting and other fittings. Some businesses claim they can source most of the material package for an entire house.

Structural timber, plywood, formply and LVL are increasingly part of the same offer.

This is not just a builder finding a factory online and hoping for the best. Many of these businesses offer a complete service, including factory selection, samples, product development, quality inspections, compliance documentation, freight and delivery to site. Some also provide local warehousing, technical support or finance.

It is a genuine emerging distribution channel, and it has the potential to disrupt the traditional model.

We don't yet know how large it is. Customs data tells us what products are entering Australia and where they were shipped from, but it doesn't tell us whether they were purchased by an established importer, a new procurement company, a builder importing for its own projects or an overseas manufacturer supplying through a local representative.

What we can see is that imported engineered timber volumes have increased sharply, new businesses are openly promoting factory-direct supply, and the offer is becoming more sophisticated.

There may well be benefits.

More competition can improve efficiency, expose unnecessary costs and give builders access to highly capable manufacturers and new products. There are some excellent manufacturers in China and elsewhere in Asia, many producing reliable products for respected Australian brands.

Traditional model and risks

Established importers, wholesalers and merchants can't simply assume the traditional model will always be preferred. We will need to continue demonstrating the value we add and improving the way we serve customers. However, builders also need to understand what they may be taking on.

When links are removed from the supply chain, the responsibilities carried by those businesses don't disappear. They move.

The builder may be getting closer to the factory, but they may also be getting closer to risks that experienced Australian importers, wholesalers and merchants have traditionally managed on their behalf. That includes checking whether the manufacturer is capable of consistently producing the required product, whether the testing is current, whether the certificate applies to the actual factory and production line, and whether the product delivered is the same product that was originally tested.

It also includes understanding where the timber was harvested, what species have been used, whether the supply chain has been properly documented and whether there are risks associated with illegal logging, modern slavery or sanctioned timber.

Then there are the more immediate commercial issues: exchange rates, deposits, production delays, shipping, customs clearance, damaged goods, incorrect quantities, products that do not match the approved sample and the time required to obtain replacements.

If a problem arises, the builder needs to know who will answer the phone, who will

inspect the product, who will carry the cost of delays and who has the insurance and financial capacity to meet a claim.

An overseas manufacturer may be perfectly reputable and may genuinely offer a warranty. But that warranty may provide little comfort if the remedy is simply another pack of product supplied at the factory gate. It may not cover freight, removal, engineering, labour, delay, consequential loss or reinstatement after the product has been installed.

This is where merchants need to be confident in explaining their own model.

When a builder challenges the merchant's margin, the answer is to explain what's behind the price.

"You are not just buying the product from us. You are buying local stock, technical knowledge, credit, reliable delivery and someone in Australia who is accountable if there is a problem."

They can also ask the builder some practical questions:

- Who is the importer of record?
- Who has verified the product certificate?
- Can the individual batch be linked to the testing?
- Who has checked the timber's provenance?
- What happens if the shipment is delayed, damaged or does not match the order?
- Who pays to replace it?
- Who carries the product liability insurance?
- And who will still be here in five or ten years if a latent defect emerges?

Those are not scare tactics. They are questions any builder should ask before placing a substantial order directly with an unfamiliar supply chain. Merchants should also be prepared to demonstrate their own value rather than simply describe it.

That means being clear about delivery reliability, technical support, access to replacement stock, credit terms, warranty assistance and the work undertaken by reputable importers to manage product compliance and provenance.

It may also mean helping the builder compare like with like.

A factory-direct price may look substantially lower, but the comparison can change once the builder includes freight, customs charges, storage, finance costs, exchange-rate exposure, minimum order quantities, damaged or surplus stock, inspection costs and the risk of delays.

The point is that the saving should be assessed against the full responsibility being assumed.

Let me know if you've had experiences with customers taking up these offers - good or bad.



2026 SA, NT & WA Timber & Hardware Industry Awards

The 2026 Timber and Hardware Industry Awards celebrate the people and businesses shaping the future of SA, NT & WA timber and hardware industry.



Award Categories

- NTHA Trainee/Apprentice of the Year
- NTHA Student of the Year
- Outstanding Employee Award
- 30+ Years Industry Service
- Safety Champion Award
- Industry Icon
- Workplace Equity Award
- Trade Store of the Year
- Retail Store of the Year Under 2500sqm
- Retail Store of the Year Over 2500sqm
- Best Off-Site Manufacturing Award
- Building Materials Supplier of the Year
- Hardware Retail Supplier of the Year
- Timber Supplier of the Year
- Supplier Sales Representative of the Year



Recognising excellence matters:

- Celebrate businesses and individuals who go above and beyond every day
- Highlight outstanding customer service, innovation, and professionalism
- Recognise contributions to community support and sustainable practices
- Shine a spotlight on those driving growth and setting industry benchmarks

Don't miss your chance:

- Secure your tickets before sales close to avoid missing one of the timber and hardware industry's most anticipated events.
- Join industry leaders, merchants, suppliers, manufacturers and emerging talent on **Friday, 30 October 2026**.
- Held at the prestigious National Wine Centre in the heart of Adelaide.
- Celebrate the outstanding businesses and individuals helping shape the future of the timber and hardware industry across SA, NT & WA.
- With strong interest expected again this year, early ticket purchases are encouraged to secure your place at this premier industry celebration.





Richard Hyett
AFPA - Acting CEO

NEW FLAWED CARBON METHOD DOESN'T ADD UP

AFPA has echoed serious concerns raised by Forestry Australia over the Federal Government's controversial new carbon credit method,

warning it undermines the integrity and credibility of Australia's carbon market.

Forestry Australia has identified significant technical flaws in the new Improved Native Forest Management in Multiple-use Public Native Forests Method (INFM), with its forest carbon experts warning it could substantially overstate carbon abatement.

The latest analysis also shows the method could over-credit projects by between 40 and 100 per cent, even before accounting for carbon leakage and harvested wood products.

AFPA Acting CEO Richard Hyett said the alarming independent research reinforced concerns the sustainable forest products industry had been raising for more than 18 months.

"As we have highlighted on several occasions, this method does not meet the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) scheme's own requirements for integrity, transparency or additionality," Mr Hyett said.

"The decision to register the method clearly prioritised politics over science and will damage public confidence in the integrity and transparency of the scheme."

Mr Hyett said the method would generate carbon credits without delivering genuine additional emissions reductions and relied on science that had been challenged by independent experts and government scientists.

"We are very concerned the new method could flood the market with low-integrity ACCUs, undermining confidence in legitimate carbon projects and weakening investment in genuine climate action.

"Australia's carbon credit scheme is designed to encourage real carbon abatement and high-integrity environmental outcomes, and it's important the scheme remains focused on delivering genuine emissions reductions rather than being used to retrospectively fund policy decisions.

"Our carbon credit scheme is a critical part of Australia's framework to meet net zero

ambitions and it's vital that its integrity is maintained to deliver genuine carbon abatement."



Gavin Matthew
EWPAA CEO

REGULATORY UNCERTAINTY IS ALMOST AS BAD AS BAD REGULATION

Industry needs both supportive policy and regulatory certainty to make effective business, hiring and investment decisions.

When government sets clear guidelines, businesses can plan for the next five to ten years with confidence. However, when rules are constantly paused, reviewed, or left open-ended, investments stall, new hiring freezes, and economic growth slows down. Companies struggle to map out their next moves because the rules of the game are either uncertain to begin with or change mid-match.

The issue is not that businesses or the supply chain refuse to adapt or evolve. Industry can adapt to changing policy and regulation if it is consulted on effectively, and the costs and benefits are carefully considered. Business owners are realistic; they understand that government policy, public needs, and the market change, and policy and rules must keep up. What is a struggle is the lack of real consultation and ongoing uncertainty, in addition to navigating a range of complex and inconsistent requirements between different States and Territories.

Three recent major examples of regulatory uncertainty impacting the timber and engineered wood products manufacturing sector include:

- **Built environment and the National Construction Code (NCC):** Delays and pauses on some necessary NCC changes and inconsistencies between adoption rules and timelines by different Australian jurisdictions. Builders and developers are left guessing which rules apply where, creating uncertainty and potentially driving up project costs. Meanwhile, manufacturers need certainty and consistency to provide effective guidance and compliance documentation to the market.

- **Airborne chemical workplace safety reviews:** The prolonged review of Safe Work Australia's workplace exposure limits for key workplace base chemicals has dragged on for nearly a decade. Making matters more difficult is the lack of early stakeholder engagement in the review process and lack of an effective cost-benefit assessment of proposals. Some of the originally proposed new limits (for example, for formaldehyde – a naturally occurring chemical which is the base of many effective adhesives) were not underpinned by detailed evidence and would have been so harmful if implemented that manufacturers see these drastic regulatory changes as a significant risk against investment, industry growth, and generating new jobs.
- **Timber resource decisions:** Sudden State and local government decisions on locking up sustainably managed hardwood forests or creating an uneven playing field for establishing new renewable forest plantations is significantly impacting investment and supply chains. The hardwood sector cannot secure reliable materials or pivot to new options when resources are cut off overnight without adequate support and a clear transition plan, and the renewable forest plantation sector needs new trees to grow and innovate to meet the critical demand for building new homes. Unfortunately, this is resulting in pushing manufacturing offshore, regional job losses, reduced supply of key construction products and increased costs for the consumer.

Industry obviously does not want a completely hands-off government to succeed; however, they do need a predictable, level playing field. If policymakers want to unlock future investment, new jobs to build and make things in Australia, they must move away from unpredictable policy shifts and uncertain regulation. A healthy sector with the confidence to grow and innovate needs to be consulted effectively and an ongoing commitment to give our industries the certainty they need to build for tomorrow.

As always, ensuring timber building product compliance is essential. A reputable trusted certification mark is a great way to have confidence that the manufacturing facility, the timber building product, and associated claims have been inspected, audited, tested and reviewed against product standards by independent experts. EWPAA has you covered! **T**



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New Zealand Timber Design Awards 2026

Recognising “the continued growth and maturity of NZ’s timber sector”. **By Michael Smith**

After a keenly felt three-year absence, the New Zealand Timber Design Awards made a triumphant return to the spotlight – part of a full day in Auckland “dedicated to learning, collaboration and celebrating excellence in New Zealand timber design and construction”.

The day began with ‘Timber Delivered’, a seminar that involved teams behind five leading mass timber projects sharing the lessons that don’t necessarily make it into case studies.

Proceedings concluded in the evening with a gala dinner at which 17 Category Award Winners and 11 Highly Commended projects were recognised.

Daniel Scheibmair, Chair of Timber Unlimited (presenter of the awards), says what stood out “wasn’t just the quality of the

winning projects, but the willingness of our industry to share knowledge so openly throughout the day. That’s how we continue to grow confidence in timber and deliver even better outcomes for clients and communities.”

SUPREME AWARD

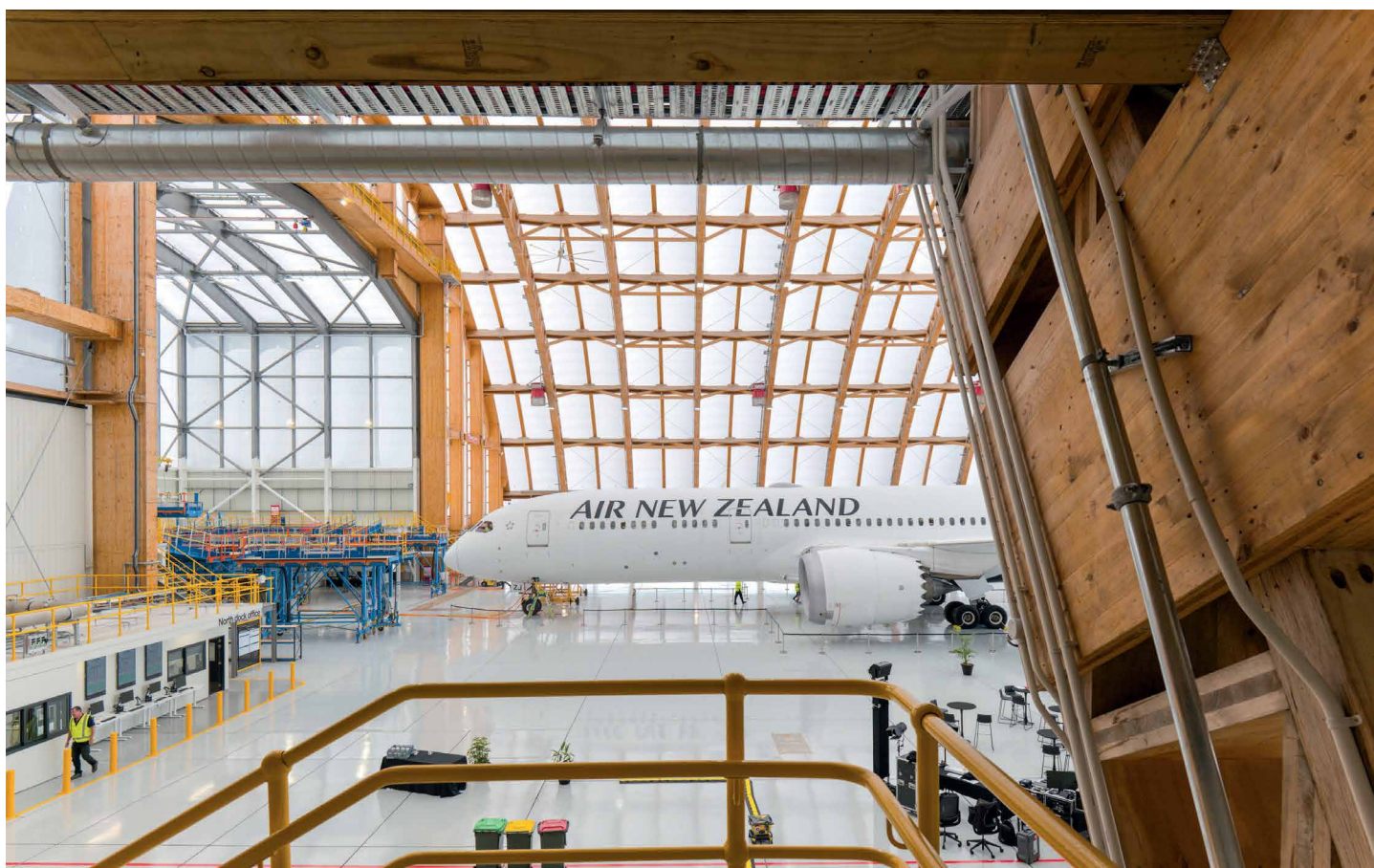
The evening’s highest honour, the Resene Supreme Award, went to Air New Zealand’s Hangar 4, by Studio Pacific Architecture (also a joint winner of the Nelson Pine Commercial & Industrial Building Design Award).

The judging panel described the project as “a benchmark achievement, demonstrating both innovation and exceptional engineering elegance in timber design and construction”.

A combination of LVL and CLT, under an EFTE envelope, the project illustrates



Above: MC and Judge Tom Webster, an NZ-registered architect and host of *Grand Designs New Zealand*.



Above: Hangar 4: “Timber’s strength-to-weight efficiency made the arch-truss solution viable at this scale.”

PHOTOS: (ABOVE) TIMBER UNLIMITED; (BELOW) STUDIO PACIFIC ARCHITECTURE



Hangar 4: "The timber trusses were rotated into place using New Zealand's largest crawler crane – an approach shaped by the site constraints and ongoing adjacent operations."

"Dedicated to learning, collaboration and celebrating excellence in New Zealand timber design and construction."

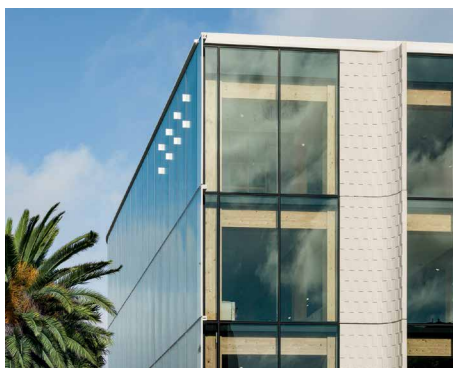
timber's environmental benefits, seismic resilience, corrosion resistance and structural efficiency – and its viability for large-scale infrastructure through precision manufacturing, complex logistics and connection design.

(*Timber Trader News* first reported on the plan for Air New Zealand's Hangar 4 in our Mar/Apr 2023 edition. An interview with lead architect Patrick Thompson followed in the May/Jun 2024 edition as the project got under way. And in our Nov/Dec 2025 edition we reported on the opening of Hangar 4, attended by Air New Zealand CEO Greg Foran and Prime Minister Christopher Luxon.)

211 HIGH STREET

The Simpson Strong-Tie People's Choice Award went to 211 High Street, by Ignite Architects. More than 700 votes were cast over the 48-hour voting period, highlighting the strong interest in and enthusiasm for timber projects across the wider industry and community.

Located in the Christchurch CBD, 211 High Street is a four-level commercial building whose structure is defined by the selective use of timber. As noted by Timber Unlimited,

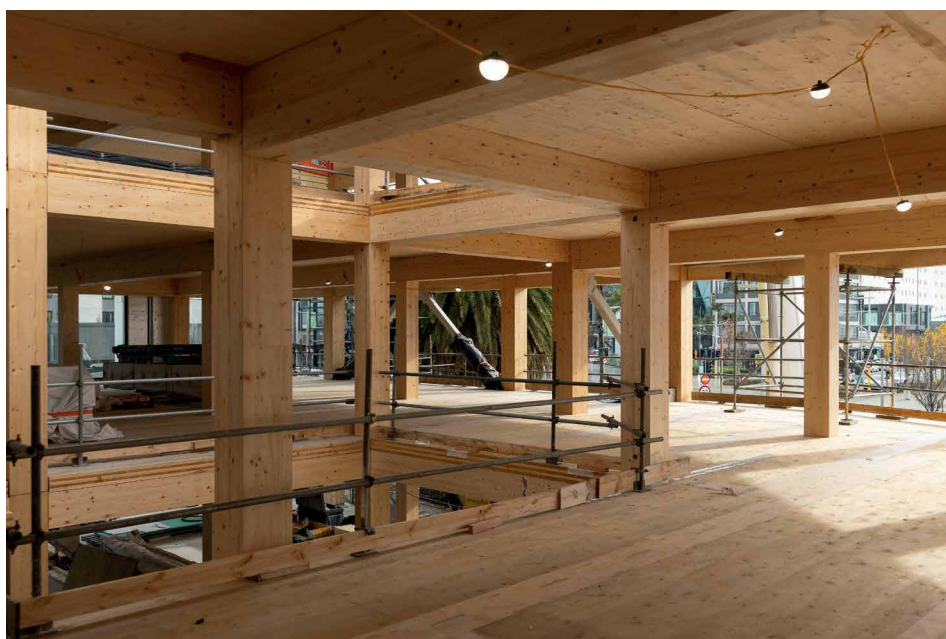


Above: 211 High Street: "Timber was chosen for its strength-to-weight ratio ... delivering construction efficiency and cost savings."

"A regular grid of spruce glulam columns and European spruce CLT floor and roof slabs create open floor plates that maximise tenant flexibility and adaptable fit-outs."

Key internal timber elements include white ash battens and decorative plywood linings, which enrich wall treatments ... while spruce CLT forms the atrium stair, risers and landings.

Tectonus friction dampers provide ductility and low-damage performance to achieve seismic resilience, and measurable sustainability outcomes include reduced embodied carbon, lower structural weight, and a recently achieved Green Star 6 rating. »



Above: 211 High Street: a four-level commercial building whose "structure is defined by the selective use of timber".



Above: Conradi Holzhaus “brings together natural living, advanced timber engineering, and precision manufacturing”.

CONRADI HOLZHAUS

Winner of the Spec Toolbox Innovative Timber Manufacturing & Technology Award was Conradi Holzhaus, by PTL Structural & Fire – a three-storey family home in Wānaka “that brings together natural living, advanced timber engineering, and precision manufacturing”.

The aim was to create a “healthy, toxin-free, warm and nurturing home, simple in form, natural in materiality, and efficient in performance”.

With that in mind, the holzius system was chosen as the method of construction – a merger of traditional solid timber know-how with modern CNC machining that resulted in a glue- and metal-free mass timber building.

The judges were impressed with the advances in precision timber fabrication of mechanically interlocked systems on display in Conradi Holzhaus. “A timber-only option for a building like this is a big step forward when environmental considerations are a priority, and the technology used makes this a viable concept which has previously been difficult or impossible to achieve.”



Above: Conradi Holzhaus: “The home’s form and layout are shaped by timber’s ability to provide structure, enclosure, and interior finish in one element.”

LIVING HOUSE

The Te Kāhui Whaihanga NZIA Residential Design Award for Single Family Dwelling went to Living House by RTA Studio – a modular system that demonstrates the potential of mass timber to transform affordable housing.



Above: The Living House “demonstrates the potential of mass timber to transform affordable housing”.

The judges admired the use of exposed cross-laminated timber, which brings warmth, character and a strong sense of solidity whilst supporting low embodied carbon outcomes.

“Through close collaboration with manufacturers and suppliers, the project delivers a fast, efficient and accessible housing solution. And despite its compact footprint, the high-volume exposed timber interior spaces show how sustainable, net-zero design can be both affordable and inspirational.”

RTA Studio has been working with a New Zealand engineering firm, Tonkin + Taylor, to adapt the Living House for co-housing, communal living and papakāinga housing (housing created by Māori iwi/tribes) that can be built on climate-adverse land.

It involves adapting the two- and three-bedroom designs with foundations specific to sites impacted by extreme weather and climate change. This allows the low-cost house to be easily built on bad soil types and to be relocated if necessary. The collaboration provides local authorities and

iwi with a solution for building in precarious places.

(A comprehensive profile of the Living House, including an interview with RTA Studio founder Richard Naish, can be read in the Sep/Oct 2025 edition of *Timber Trader News*.)

SUMMERSET MILLDALE

Winner of the XLAM Residential Design Award for Multi-Unit Residential Buildings (up to three levels) was Summerset Milldale, by Summerset Group Holdings Limited.

This three-storey Regional Main Building (RMB) is at the heart of the six-hectare Summerset Milldale retirement village on the Hibiscus Coast, north of Auckland – and provides communal amenities, care, serviced apartments and memory care facilities for the wider village.

As noted by Timber Unlimited, “the project utilised engineered timber systems, including CLT for floors and roof structures, alongside LVL, glulam and panelised timber framing for walls and structural support. These materials were selected for their structural



Above: Summerset Milldale: “Projects like this set a precedent for what can be achieved with timber on a large scale.”

performance, seismic resilience, and suitability for prefabrication.”

The judges felt the strength of the RMB was in the scale of using timber for such a large building – and being bold enough to use timber for a project that would typically be done in other materials. “Projects like this set a precedent for what can be achieved

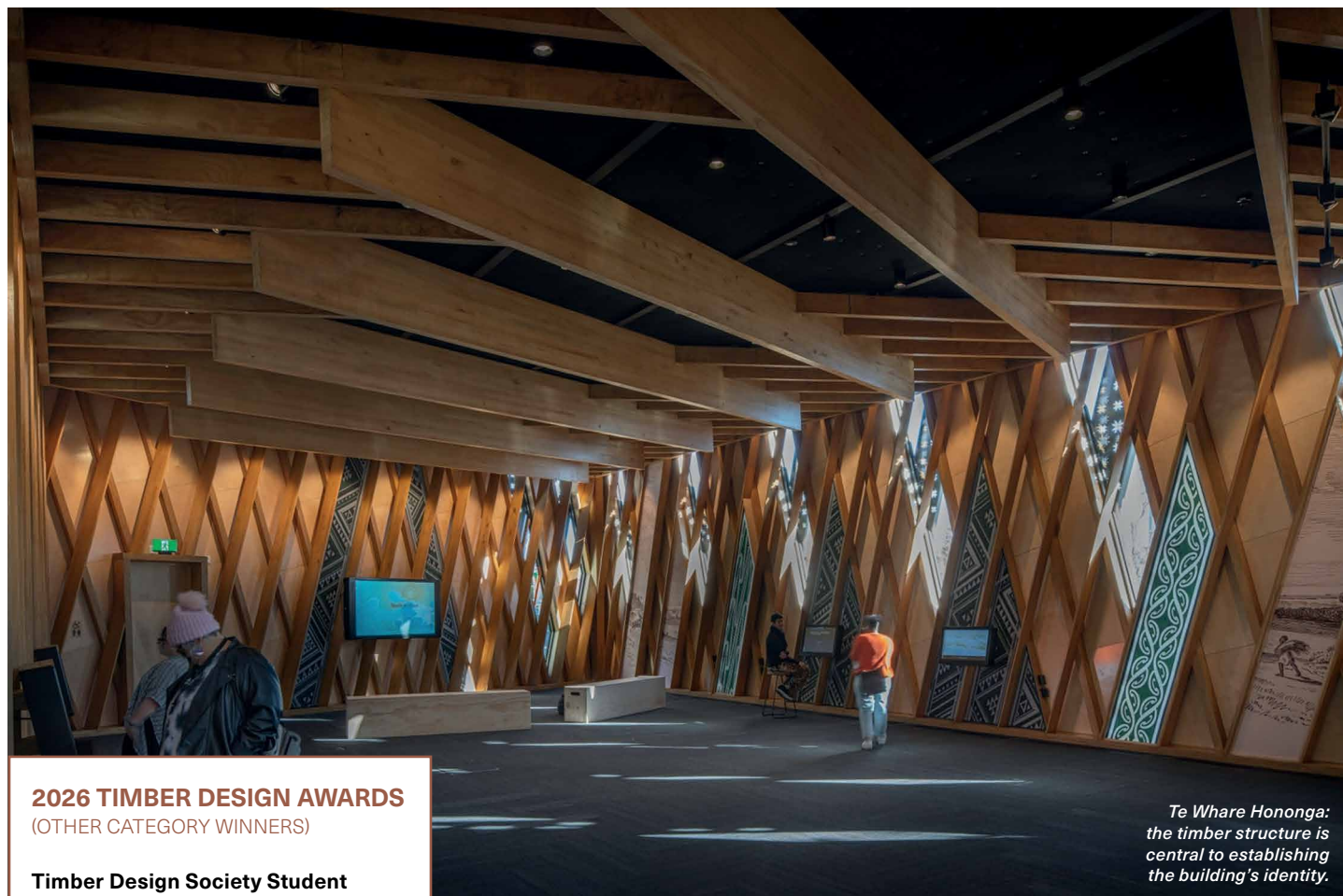
with timber on a large scale and help to provide a pathway for the future where buildings of this type become the norm rather than the exception.”

KAI TAHI, PORIRUA

A joint winner of the Nelson Pine Commercial & Industrial Building Design »



Kai Tahi, Porirua: “Timber has been used to great effect to create an attractive landmark out of an old industrial space.”



Te Whare Hononga: the timber structure is central to establishing the building's identity.

2026 TIMBER DESIGN AWARDS (OTHER CATEGORY WINNERS)

Timber Design Society Student Design Award:

Grainform; James Corles, University of Auckland

Interior Design Award:

Partridge Jewellers, Queenstown; Hannah Davies Limited

Eurotec Exterior Structure & Landscaping Design Award:

Timber Monogamy; Gregory Mann, Andrew Barrie Lab & Batchelar McDougall Consultants

Build Anatomy International Project Award (joint winners):

West Gate Tunnel Project – Timber Nets; Red Stag TimberLab Majuro ECC Sports Stadium, Marshall Islands; PTL Structural & Fire

Abodo Sustainable Development Award:

AUT Tukutuku; Jasmax

Red Stag Mid-Rise Building Design Award (over three levels):

90 Devonport Road; LT McGuinness

Prolam Hybrid Building Award:

University of Auckland B201; Jasmax

Rothoblaas Innovative Timber Engineering Award:

Dallington Bridge; Ruamoko Solutions

“The structure is held together simply with a combination of CNC housing and connections, so the focus is on the timber elements.” **TE WHARE HONONGA**

Award was Kai Tahi, Porirua, by Dunning Thornton. This public arcade and food hall marketplace makes a significant contribution to the reshaping of Porirua's waterfront by reusing an industrial warehouse and dead-end service lane.

The judges noted the human-scale features of the building, where the warmth and lightweight characteristics of the engineered timber roof, mezzanine floor and walls have been used to create a transformational space for the city.

“Timber has been used to great effect to create an attractive landmark out of an old industrial space that connects a broad range of functions – business, art, shelter and hospitality – and does so with a people-first approach.”

TE WHARE HONONGA

Commissioned by the Taranaki Anglican Trust Board, Te Whare Hononga by Tennent Brown Architects won the Techlam Public & Community Building Award. The project is an

offering to the community, and in particular to mana whenua (a tribe's territorial rights), who have long endured a painful alienation.

The judges were impressed and intrigued by the architecture – a contemporary, parallelogram planned and overtly Māori whare (house) used for hui (meetings) and exhibitions.

They noted the importance of the timber structure (a lattice of interdependent pinus radiata LVL and shaped glue-laminated elements) in establishing the building's value and identity.

“The structure is held together simply with a combination of CNC housing and connections, so the focus is on the timber elements.”

Although small, the building embodies a modern mass-timber approach – “integrated architecture versus structure with strength through form, digital modelling, careful use of CNC processing, and modern technologies.”

Thanks to Kate Smart at Timber Unlimited for her help in compiling this material. **T**

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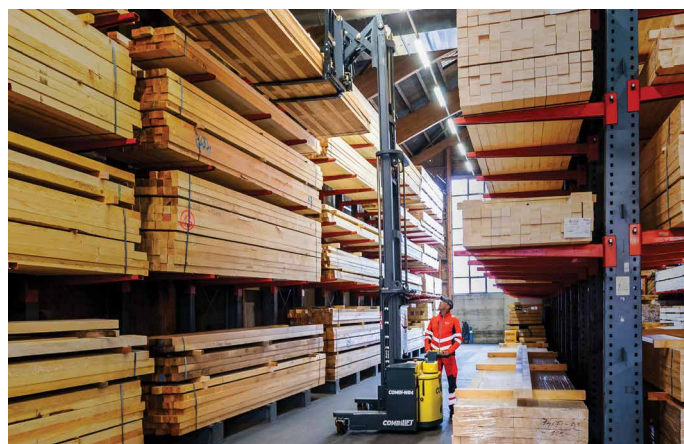
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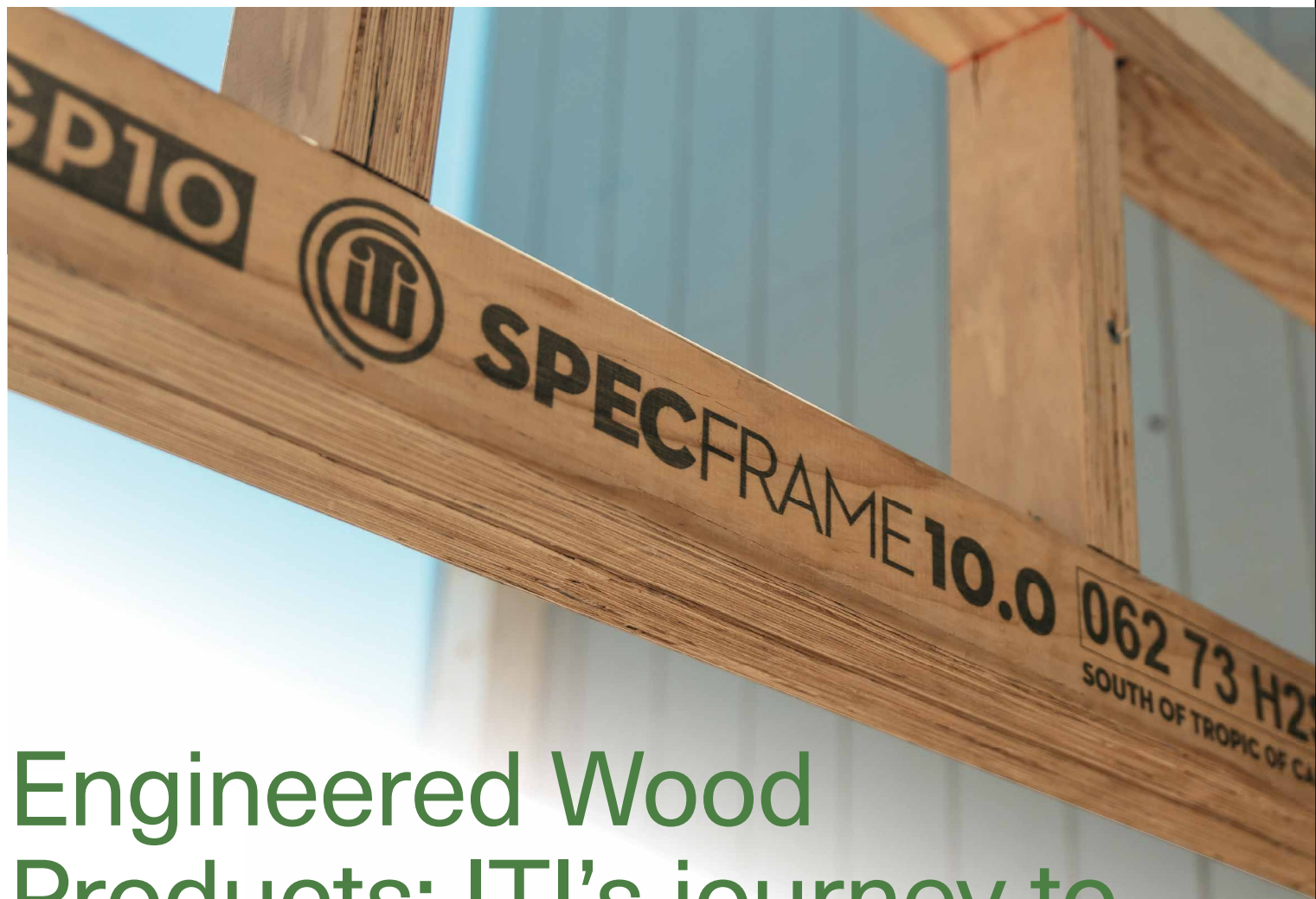
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Engineered Wood Products: ITI's journey to become a serious player

How a measured, compliance-first strategy turned ITI into one of Australia's top four EWP suppliers. **By Campbell McInnes**

The way Australia builds is changing. As the construction industry responds to demands for greater efficiency, design flexibility and more sustainable building solutions, timber is entering a new era, one where advanced engineering unlocks possibilities far beyond what traditional timber products could achieve alone.

The rise of Engineered Wood Products (EWP) reflects a fundamental shift in how buildings are designed, engineered and constructed. By combining timber's natural advantages with modern manufacturing, engineered products enable longer spans and greater structural performance, while supporting the industry's move towards lower-impact materials. Solid timber remains essential and trusted, but engineered timber delivers the consistency and dimensional stability many modern projects now require.

This shift has been building internationally for years, with engineered timber now established across Europe, North America and beyond. Australia is experiencing the same drivers: sustainability expectations, manufacturing advances, and rising demand for innovative building solutions.

It is within this landscape that ITI Australia has strategically expanded its focus on EWP. After almost four decades building its reputation as a leading supplier of structural and decorative timber, ITI recognised that the future of timber supply would require more than quality products alone, it would require complete solutions backed by technical expertise, reliable supply chains, compliance capability and customer support.

ITI's journey into EWP has been a measured, deliberate evolution rather than a rapid expansion into a new category.

Beginning with its partnership with Metsä in 2018, and followed by significant investment in product development, technical capability and supply infrastructure, ITI has positioned itself as one of Australia's four major EWP suppliers; built around a simple principle: engineered timber must meet the same standards of quality, reliability and responsible sourcing that customers expect from the ITI name.

As the industry evolves, engineered timber is set to play an increasingly important role — not as a replacement for traditional timber, but as an expansion of what timber can achieve. It's a story CEO Germano Tomassetti and EWP Category Manager Hayden Slatter know well, having lived every step of it. Here, in their own words, is how ITI built an EWP business it's prepared to put its name behind.

ALL PHOTOS: COURTESY ITI AUSTRALIA

This image: Spec Frame 10.0 has been developed and tested for use in all framing applications including wall studs and plates. Right: Hundegger Machine installed at the ITI Brisbane facility for EWP cutting to length and order.



“There’s no substitute for getting it right.”

GERMANO TOMASSETTI

CHOOSING QUALITY OVER THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE

When the market saw a surge in low-cost Chinese LVL product, ITI chose a different path, focusing instead on European product.

Tomassetti explained, “This decision, like every decision at ITI, came down to one question: does this meet the standard we’re prepared to put our name behind: not simply, is this the cheapest option available.”

That didn’t mean writing off China altogether. ITI kept visiting and watching the industry evolve, and over time identified a small core group of producers genuinely committed to compliant manufacturing and ethically sourced forestry, the standard it requires from any partner.

WHY BUILD A BRAND OF ITS OWN?

The decision to develop the Spec range under its own name, rather than simply importing whatever product was available, goes back to ITI’s history of building solutions where the market had a gap, according to Hayden Slatter, Manager of EWP at ITI Australia.

“ITI has a history of developing solutions for gaps in the market, brands such as Design Pine and Ezitrim Plus are evidence of how we go beyond what is accepted and improve and innovate,” Slatter says. “With the huge surge in, let’s say sketchy, Chinese LVL hitting the market after COVID, we knew if we wanted to source EWP products ex-China then we were going to have to control the process for the product to meet the standard required by our business.”

The Spec range was developed with that principle in mind. “We went about creating a

range that would not only complement Metsä’s Kerto range but also equip the Australian construction sector with an engineered wood product for every application,” Slatter says.

Because construction requirements vary from state to state, ITI carried out extensive market research before finalising the range, weighing the strength required in each region, the appropriate density for each application, and which raw materials and production methods best suit each product.

BUILDING THE SPEC RANGE THE RIGHT WAY

Rather than rushing to market, ITI took 18-months to do the work properly, setting up rigorous testing programs, bringing in independent Australian auditors, writing detailed product specifications, and verifying every species against the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act.

“It was slow, deliberate, and resource-intensive, because with structural products, there’s no substitute for getting it right the first time,” explained Tomassetti.

Slatter is more specific about what those 18 months involved. Before any LVL product is qualified for production, it must pass through a broad range of testing conducted by ITI. Each LVL product type and grade undergo 505 individual destructive tests per width, ensuring it can be used safely across all load applications, from beams to wall plates. Across the full Spec range, there are 13 different LVL width and grade combinations; more than 6,500 individual tests completed before the range reached market.

“Once testing is completed and qualified locally by ITI’s engineering department, the factories are subject to a pre-production audit to ensure the appropriate QA systems and recording methods are in place,” Slatter says. “Each manufacturing partner is then audited twice a year, in addition to

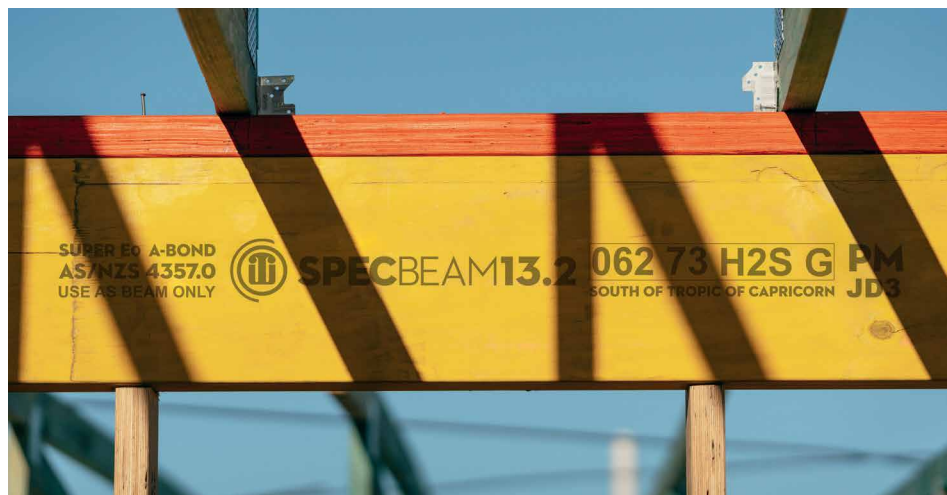
A MEASURED ENTRY, NOT A RUSHED ONE

For many years leading up to 2018, ITI was a small player in the EWP space, operating in just two states. That smaller footprint was deliberate.

“It gave us the chance to properly understand market dynamics before deciding whether a national push into such a technical category actually made sense.” ITI Australia, CEO Germano Tomassetti advised.

In 2018, the company made its move, partnering with Metsä as their premier partner in Australia, the first step that has since positioned ITI as one of the “big four” EWP importers in the country. But getting there wasn’t about speed.

“It was about making sure every step was the right one,” Tomassetti says.



Clockwise from top: Spec Beam 13.2 yellow available in NSW only; Spec Beam 13.2 used as rafters; Spec Frame 12.1 is an LVL alternative for MGP12; Spec Joist's available with pre-cut penetrations; Spec Frame 10.0 wall framing. All Spec EWP products are available with additional pre site processing.

providing production records on a regular basis."

The final step before launch is supporting documentation, technical statements, warranties and specification guides with span tables, tailored to each product's exact specifications. That work culminated late in 2025 with the release of ITI's Chinese-manufactured EWP range under the Spec brand. ITI now offers the full suite:

- Spec Frame — E10 and E12.1
- Spec Beam — E13.2 and E14.5
- Form Spec
- Edge Spec
- Spec Floor — E12.1
- Spec Chord — E14.5
- Spec Joist

Combined with its existing Metsä LVL range, this gives ITI one of the most comprehensive EWP offerings in Australia, and the response has confirmed it was worth the wait. In the range's first six months, sales have already outstripped the company's initial targets.

MORE THAN A PRODUCT RANGE

Being a genuine EWP distributor takes more than a product catalogue, it demands specialist people, engineering capability, design software, machinery and serious warehousing infrastructure. Alongside developing the Spec range, ITI invested heavily in building the team behind it: under Slatter's leadership, the company has brought in Hundegger saws across NSW, Queensland and Victoria, added a full-time engineer locally and a second overseas, built a local design team of eight supported by six more designers employed internationally, and appointed experienced state Business Development Managers in NSW, Queensland and South Australia.

COMPLIANCE: THE WORK CUSTOMERS DON'T SEE

The technical demands of EWP mean a business must invest properly if it intends to do the category right, nowhere more so than in compliance, an area most customers never see. Behind the scenes, ITI has five full-time staff dedicated solely to FSC, PEFC, Chain of Custody and Illegal Logging compliance, ensuring every product the company brings in has been legally and sustainably sourced.

Tomassetti explained, "they are the gatekeepers of our supply chain — and if they say no, we walk away, no matter how attractive the alternative looks."

It's an area, he argues, the broader market doesn't yet understand well enough. There are producers across China who fail to meet



Above: The suite of Spec EWP products were specifically requested for 2 side-by-side builds in Sydney's North West.

ITI's compliance standards, yet their product still finds its way into the country through smaller, unnamed importers less rigorous about who they buy from.

"That should concern everyone in this industry," Tomassetti says. "Beyond the legal and financial risk to the importer, the greater risk falls on the customer who unknowingly buys non-compliant product, because unlike a finger-jointed moulding, these are structural components used in critical building applications. Getting this wrong isn't a cosmetic issue; it's a safety one."

Given how central compliance has become to ITI's EWP strategy, it's worth letting Tomassetti expand on exactly why it matters so much in this category, and what it should mean for the customers buying it.

WHY IS COMPLIANCE ESPECIALLY CRITICAL IN EWP?

"Engineered wood products are structural components: they carry real load in real buildings, which puts them in a different risk category to decorative or non-structural timber," Tomassetti explains. "Unlike solid sawn timber, where a customer can often visually assess grade and quality, EWP is manufactured: multiple layers of wood veneer, bonded together under controlled conditions." That means the product's integrity depends entirely on what happened during manufacturing, the species used, the adhesives, the process control: none of which is visible once it reaches a building site.

"All they can rely on is the branding on the side of the product," Tomassetti says. "Some of these imports aren't even branded

More than 6,500 tests before the range reached market.

correctly, which should be the first warning sign. If compliance isn't verified at the source, there's no way to catch it downstream."

THE REAL RISKS OF NON-COMPLIANT PRODUCT

The risks, Tomassetti says, sit on two levels. For the importer, there's direct legal exposure under the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act, reputational damage, and the risk of selling a product not fit for purpose:



Above: ITI's skilled staff are the core of everything they do from design to processing of EWP orders.

one branded E13.2 being used for an application it was never tested for. A non-compliant EWP product may not perform to its stated grade or span rating, which in a load-bearing application is a safety issue, not a cosmetic one. There's also a traceability gap: if something fails, there's often no paper trail back to origin.

Tomassetti shared, "while the customer doesn't normally face the legal exposure, selling an unknown cheap product does expose them to structural failure risk, resulting in potential losses if they can't claim on the supplier when a failure occurs, which is a bigger risk than they tend to understand."

THE COMPLIANCE TEAM AS GATEKEEPER

ITI's compliance team functions as the gatekeeper before any supplier or product enters the range, ensuring all regulated timber imported into Australia is sourced responsibly under the Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012 (ILPA), administered through a due diligence system that reviews supplier documentation, verifies species and country of harvest, and maintains compliance records for every product entering the business. "We don't rely solely on paper certification," Tomassetti says. The process includes on-the-ground facility visits, independent Australian auditors, and structured testing over an extended period: for the Spec range, around 18 months before product came to market.

"Critically, they have veto power, if they're not satisfied a supplier meets our standard, we walk away, regardless of price or availability," Tomassetti says. "That's a





Above: ITI provide their customers access to the full product range from 0.6m through to 12.0m lengths in all sizes packaged as project specific job lots.

deliberate structure: compliance isn't a sign-off at the end of a commercial decision, it's a precondition for one."

WHAT CERTIFICATION REALLY MEANS

Independent forest certification schemes such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) provide assurance that timber has been sourced from forests managed to recognise environmental, social and economic standards. Certification alone doesn't replace ITI's due diligence obligations under the ILPA, but it provides valuable supporting evidence in assessing the risk of illegally harvested timber entering the supply chain, and only where a low-risk determination can be made is a product approved for import.

"It's not a marketing label, it's a documented chain of custody, audited at each stage of the process. For customers, it means they can stand behind what they're specifying or on-selling, and demonstrate

that to their own clients, regulators or certification bodies if asked." Tomassetti, on FSC and PEFC certification

For consumers further down the chain, certified timber offers greater confidence that products come from responsibly managed forests, reducing the risk of contributing to illegal logging.

WHAT SHOULD CUSTOMERS ASK THEIR EWP SUPPLIER?

Tomassetti's advice to customers assessing EWP suppliers is straightforward: ask directly for certification, not just whether it exists, but whether the supplier can produce it without hesitation, ask about their track record rather than comparing price per lineal metre alone, and ask what happens if something goes wrong.

"A supplier with a genuine compliance program will have a clear answer; one without will often avoid the question," he says. Because EWP is a structural product, customers should also require test data demonstrating conformance with the relevant Australian Standards for the stress

grade being sold — verified independently rather than relying on overseas test reports alone.

TRACEABILITY: FROM COMPLIANCE NICETY TO COMMERCIAL NECESSITY

International timber supply chains are long and complex, and illegal logging remains a real global problem. As regulatory scrutiny increases and builders, developers and their financiers face growing pressure to demonstrate ethical sourcing, traceability has shifted from a compliance nicety to a commercial necessity.

"Customers increasingly expect it, and regulators increasingly require it, but few want to pay for it. Until the industry understands this level of compliance cost, ethical sourcing companies will continue to battle with low-cost, non-compliant product," Tomassetti explained.

A COMPLETE SOLUTIONS PROVIDER

Compliance is one part of a broader philosophy that now defines ITI's EWP business: a complete solutions provider: a phrase used often in the industry, which Tomassetti is careful to define in practice.

"Being a 'complete solutions provider' isn't just about having a large catalogue: it means eliminating complexity and introducing ease for the customer. Instead of a customer having to stitch together products, technical support and logistics from multiple vendors, a complete solutions model consolidates the entire workflow into a single, reliable point of contact," Tomassetti said.

That aim breaks down into four practical commitments. The first is single-source procurement: by supplying the full spread of a customer's EWP needs, ITI reduces the number of purchase orders, invoices and delivery coordination points a customer has



Built on a standard, not a shortcut.

Above: ITI offer a full technical support to the market. ITI employ skilled EWP designers, dedicated engineers, business development managers and the most thorough logging compliance team in the country. ITI aim to answer the questions our customers haven't asked yet.

to manage. The second, arguably the most important, is unified technical support and compliance: expert guidance and certifications such as FSC® or PEFC coming directly from the same partner supplying the physical goods, rather than being chased down separately.

The third is consolidated logistics and inventory security. Every additional vendor in a customer's supply chain brings its own freight run, its own handling and its own administration — costs that compound with each extra supplier involved. Backed by substantial distribution networks, undercover storage capacity and one of the largest stock profiles in the category, ITI can stage, bundle and dispatch a customer's full order on a single truck, rather than several partial ones.

"Consolidated deliveries reduce freight costs and mean fewer trucks in customer yards, which is less disruptive and lets our customers focus on their customers," Tomassetti says. "More broadly, it strips duplicated cost out of the whole supply chain — freight, handling and admin that would otherwise be repeated with every extra vendor. Removing that duplication is what lets our customers stay competitive on price, without having to absorb that overhead themselves."

The fourth is single-point accountability: one point of contact for any specification query, performance question or delivery change, so problem resolution is fast and straightforward.

GETTING MORE FROM EVERY TREE

Beyond compliance and logistics, ITI's EWP push is part of a broader shift in how the timber industry thinks about resource efficiency: engineered products, Tomassetti says, are designed to extract more structural value from less raw material.

"Rather than requiring large-diameter, often slower-growing logs the way solid structural timber can, engineered products can be manufactured from smaller-diameter, faster-growing plantation timber, using veneers, strands or fibre that would otherwise go to lower-value use," he says. "That means more of each tree, and more of each forestry rotation, ends up in a high-performance structural product rather than as waste or off cuts."

It's a case that resonates with a construction sector under growing pressure to reduce its environmental footprint, and Tomassetti expects that pressure to keep building.

"We expect sustainability to become less of a differentiator and more of a baseline expectation. Green building rating tools, embodied carbon considerations and corporate ESG commitments are all pushing timber, as a renewable, carbon-storing



Above: Spec Frame 10.0 is fuelling the markets demand for quality and conforming LVL framing options.

"Spec Frame performs well, looks great."

HAYDEN SLATTER

material: further into favour over steel and concrete in appropriate applications." Says Tomassetti.

Within that shift, Tomassetti expects demand to increasingly favour suppliers who can prove their sustainability credentials with real documentation. "That plays directly to the compliance investment we've made over the past several years," he says.

WHAT'S MOVING IN THE MARKET RIGHT NOW

With the Spec range now well established, Slatter says the trend is unmistakable: engineered wall framing is winning share fast, with Spec Frame 10.0 LVL and Spec Frame 12.1 LVL in extremely high demand.

"These products are becoming the first choice for many timber yards, truss and frame fabricators, and builders when selecting an LVL framing supplier," Slatter says. "Spec Frame performs well, looks great, has been appropriately tested for use as wall studs and plates, and is supported by all the required product documentation."

That last point is one Slatter returns to when asked about smaller businesses looking to import their own LVL framing directly: an ambition he's seeing more often, and one he urges caution around.

Slatter explained, "they need to be mindful that most products being offered to them are not fully tested for use as both wall studs and plates, and that any third-party certification

should be cross-referenced against the appropriate Australian standards. They should also understand that an FSC certificate does not automatically mean compliance with the Illegal Logging Prohibition Amendment Act 2024, and that their liability exposure should be assessed against the ABCB's position on non-conforming and non-compliant building products."

It's a timely warning. As compliance obligations tighten, the gap between a certificate that looks reassuring and a product genuinely fit for purpose is exactly where risk tends to hide.

BUILT ON A STANDARD, NOT A SHORTCUT

The growth of ITI's EWP business isn't the result of one product launch, it's the product of a long, considered strategy: build the right partnerships, invest in the right people, and never compromise on compliance, even when it would be easier and cheaper to do so.

That's the standard that built ITI's reputation over 39 years, and, on the evidence of the Spec range's first six months in market, it's the standard now carrying the company's EWP business forward. As Australian construction leans further into engineered timber, the businesses that earn the industry's trust won't necessarily be the ones with the biggest catalogue or the sharpest price: they'll be the ones customers can rely on to have done the work no one sees, long before the product reaches the job site. **T**

For further information on ITI Australia's Building Solutions, please visit: <http://itiaustralia.com.au/spec-range/>





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SPECFRAME 12.1 **SPECFRAME 10.0**

SPECBEAM 14.5 **SPECBEAM 13.2**

SPEC FLOOR 12.1 **SPECLAM 15+**

SPEC JOIST **EDGE SPEC** **FORMSPEC**

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DESIGN  **LINK**

How HUBTEX Phoenix is reshaping timber warehousing

How smarter handling is reshaping timber yards. **By Campbell McInnes**

For anyone who has spent time on a timber yard, the daily juggling act is a familiar one. Real estate is at a premium, labour is hard to find and keep, and every pack of timber that moves through the warehouse is a pack that could be damaged, delayed or mishandled. It's a business built on volume and margin, and both of those things are squeezed the moment product handling goes wrong.

For Bruce Peatman, Managing Director of Hubtex Australia, these pressures are exactly why the company's flagship multi-directional side-loader, the Phoenix, has become such a fixture in timber yards around the country. Bruce walked me through how the Phoenix has been built, not as an off-the-shelf forklift, but as a platform that can be shaped around whatever a timber business throws at it.

A MACHINE BUILT AROUND THE PRODUCT

The Phoenix didn't appear out of nowhere. According to Bruce, it grew out of Hubtex's earlier multi-directional side-loaders, and was deliberately positioned as the company's

premium offering. "The Phoenix, is differentiated because it really is our frontline machine. It's our premium product," he explained, contrasting it with the more standardised MaxX range.

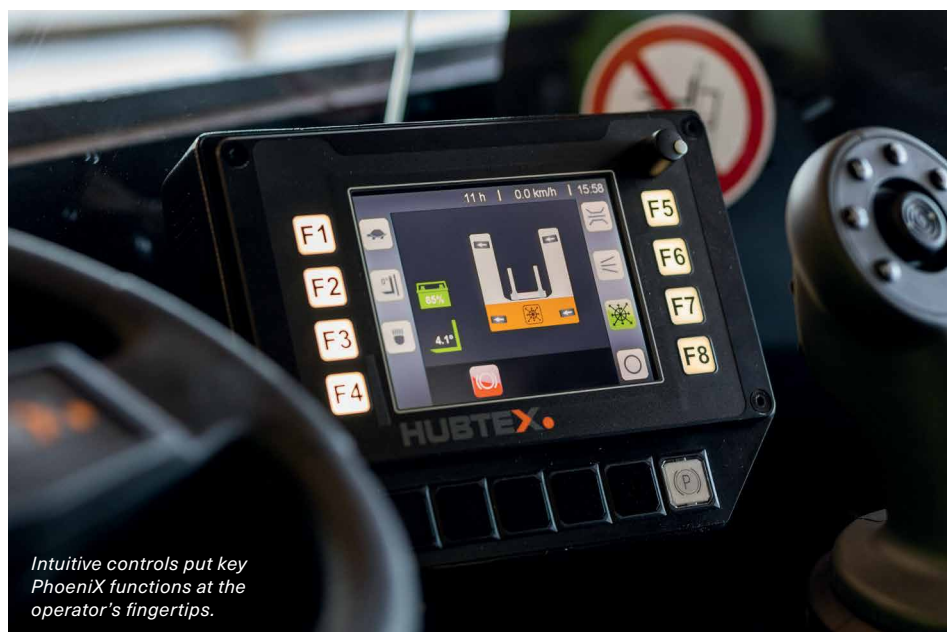
What sets it apart is the sheer breadth of configuration available. "The Phoenix has the greatest level of variation. We can change that machine, and configure it to suit basically any customer's needs," Bruce said. That flexibility runs from load bed length and fork spacing right through to electronics, sensors and guidance systems; "our basic platform to do anything to, up to and including automation."

This matters more in timber than almost any other industry, because timber simply doesn't behave like the cargo most forklifts were designed for. As Bruce put it, "Conventional forklifts are made to handle an ice cube, a pallet." Timber, by contrast, comes in long lengths, flexible packs and slippery surfaces that can shift the moment they're lifted. Engineered Wood Products (EWP) can run anywhere from 2.4 to 20 metres,

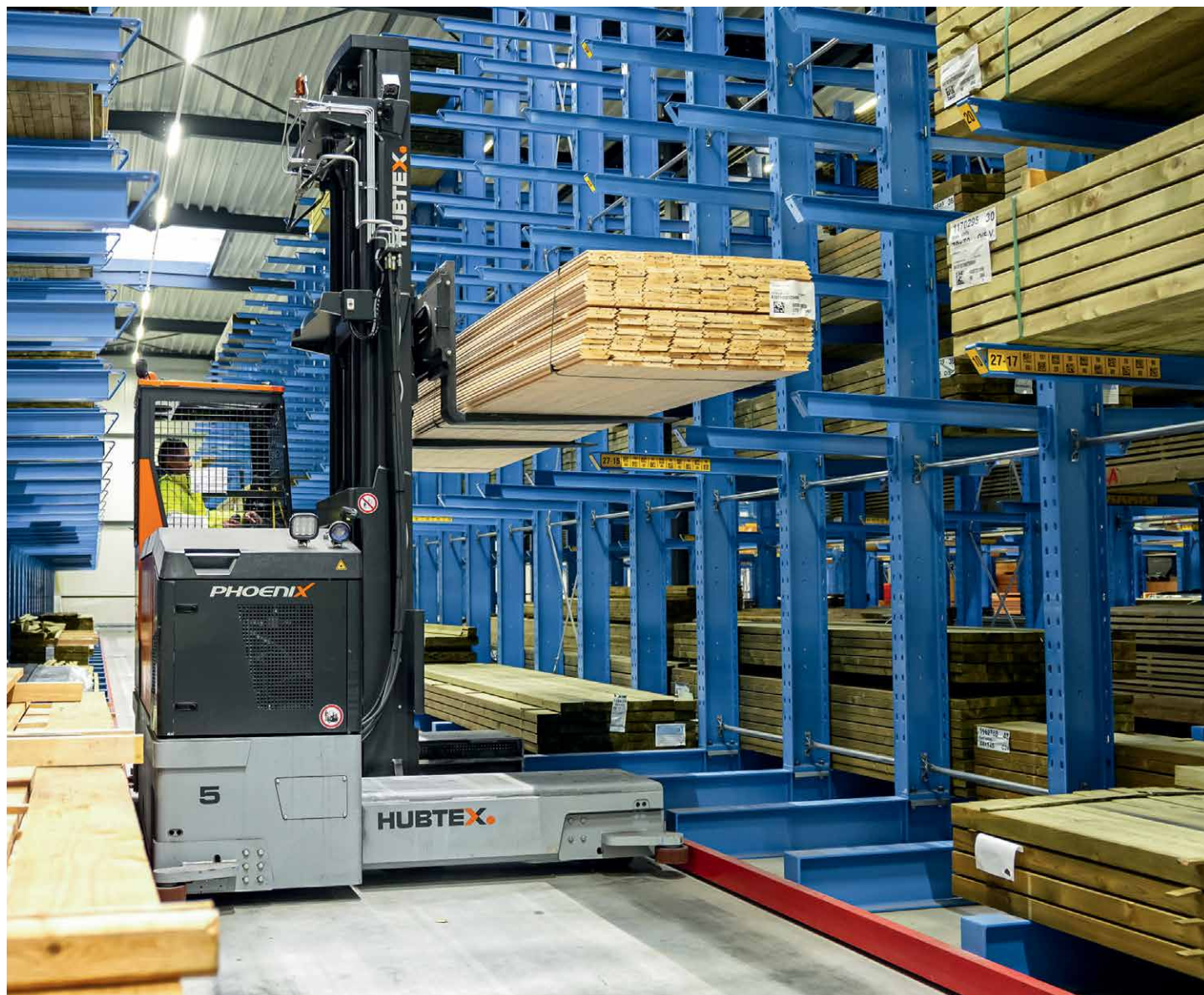
with most sitting around the five to six metre mark, a world away from the neat, square pallet a standard forklift is designed to lift.

That variability shows up in the equipment itself. While Bruce is quick to point out there's no such thing as a "standard" Phoenix, the most common configuration sold into timber yards uses a 1200-millimetre load bed matched to 1200-millimetre forks, set up to work with 1200-millimetre racking arms as a complete system. But that's only the starting point. Hubtex has built carriages with tynes spaced up to ten metres apart, spreader bars stretching to 15 metres, and integrated carriages nine or ten metres long where the product demands it. At the other end of the scale, Bruce is currently quoting a machine with a 2.5-metre load bed and 1.8-metre forks for wide stillages, and configurations as narrow as 600 millimetres for the tightest aisles. "This is the beauty of the Phoenix," he said, "it's customisable to the specific product."

This is arguably the Phoenix's real point of difference as no two sites end up with the same truck. Fork tynes and load beds are just one part of it. Camera systems can be positioned wherever an operator needs them, battery chemistry can be chosen between lead acid and lithium-ion, and tyres can be specified for warehouses, hard yards or rough outdoor conditions. "We can set up trucks with rubber tyres," Bruce said, noting that in Europe, Phoenix trucks are built to operate in snow, so "these Phoenix trucks are not just confined to the warehouses." Everything, right up to guidance and automation packages, is built around the individual site and customer requirements. As Bruce sums it up, the process "starts with the product", its dimensions, weight and handling quirks. Even within one business, the bulk of a product range is often straightforward to design around, "however they may have 20% of their products which are more unique to that business," and it's in solving that trickier slice that Hubtex's 31 years in timber earns their keep.



Intuitive controls put key Phoenix functions at the operator's fingertips.



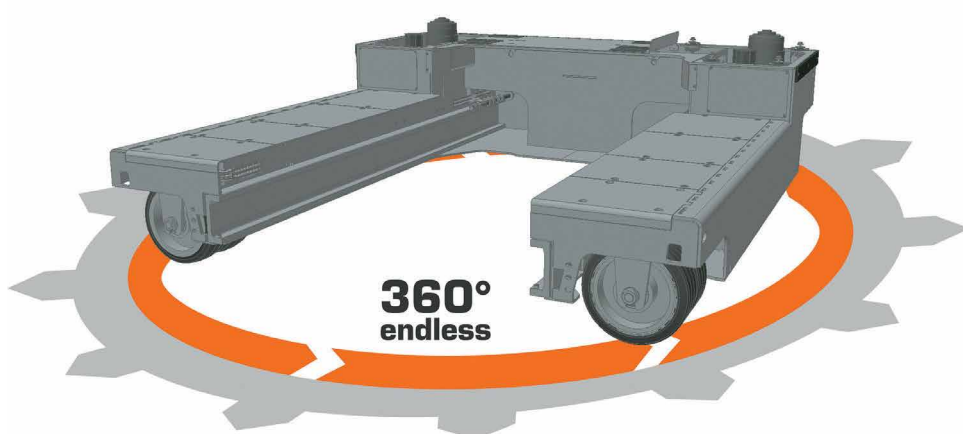
Above: Phoenix MQ35, customisable sideloader offers maximum flexibility. Below: Phoenix offers 360° multidirectional HX-steering, changing direction without stopping.

“The Phoenix has the greatest level of variation. We can change that machine, and configure it to suit basically any customer’s needs.”

BRUCE PEATMAN

PROTECTING PRODUCT: REDUCING DAMAGE AT EVERY TURN

Product damage is one of the quiet costs of the timber industry, rarely headline news, but a constant drain on margin. Bruce doesn’t mince words about its scale. “Product damage, that’s a huge cost for the timber industry,” he said, noting that every extra



handling step increases the risk of damaging both the timber and its packaging to the point where it’s no longer merchantable.

The Phoenix tackles this in a fundamentally different way to a conventional counterbalance forklift. Rather than lifting a pack across the machine and travelling with it hanging out to one side, the Phoenix carries the load parallel

to its own direction of travel, supported along its length by a proper load bed. Bruce advised, “customers pick up the product further out from the centre of gravity, which prevents a lot of turning and twisting movements.”

The load bed itself does much of the heavy lifting when it comes to protecting flexible or slippery products such as MDF. Bruce used >>



Above: Stable load support helps reduce flex and product damage.

MDF architrave packs as an example of just how much a product can flex and slide as it's picked up, which is precisely why a stabilising deck makes such a difference. Widening the carriage compounds the benefit: Bruce explained, "instead of forks sitting roughly a metre apart, as they would on a conventional forklift, a Phoenix can support the product out to two and a half or three metres, dramatically reducing flex and the risk of a pack sliding off the tines."

There's also a double-handling saving that flows through the whole operation. "A customer can basically, with a sideloader, take the timber from the truck into the racks," Bruce said, cutting out intermediate steps and the damage risk that comes with each one.

GUIDING HANDS: PRECISION TECHNOLOGY FOR CONFIDENT OPERATORS

Getting a long pack of timber accurately into a rack, time after time, is where operator skill and machine technology need to work

together. Hubtex offers a layered set of guidance options depending on how far a customer wants to go.

The entry point is straightforward rail and roller guidance. "The most common system we use is guide rails and guide rollers," Bruce said. "It is a simple system, relatively low cost which works in most applications." For longer runs, wire guidance takes over, quietly steering the truck down the aisle so the operator can focus on positioning rather than driving. "The operator doesn't have to worry about where he's steering the truck as it just goes down that aisle," Bruce said. "He can then stop at the location, lifts at the correct height, and the job is done."

From there, the technology moves towards genuine automation. Barcode readers can tell a truck's position in an aisle down to the millimetre, allowing the system to work hand-in-hand with a warehouse management system to guarantee the right pack is picked or placed. Laser guidance offers another option, both in and out of the racks.

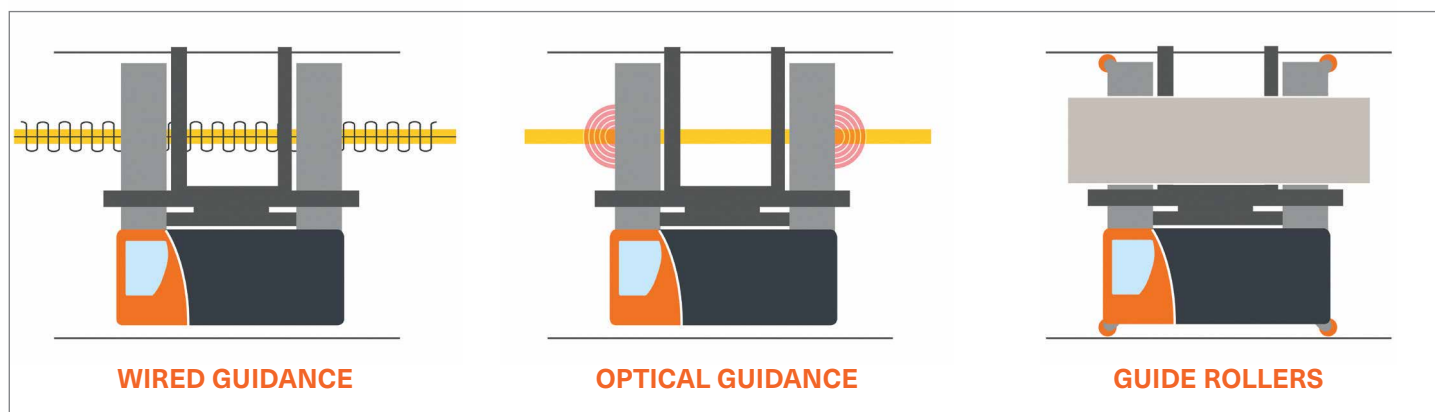
One of the more recent additions is an aisle entry assist system, which uses cameras to read the racking and automatically align and steer the truck into an aisle at the push of a button; a task operator previously had to manage manually. Height selection systems then take over once inside, stopping the forks at exactly the right level. The upshot, according to Bruce, is that guidance technology quietly removes a layer of cognitive load from the operator. "It takes it out of their mind," he said. "All the operator has to do is look in both directions... look out for pedestrians, and hazards."

Visibility plays its own role in reducing damage and improving safety. Because the Phoenix cabin sits facing the load side-on, operators aren't twisting around to check a load behind them the way they would in a conventional forklift. "With our machine, we sit facing the load, sideways, so it's as simple as looking to the right or the left as you're driving with the load," Bruce said, with cameras available to enhance the view further wherever needed.

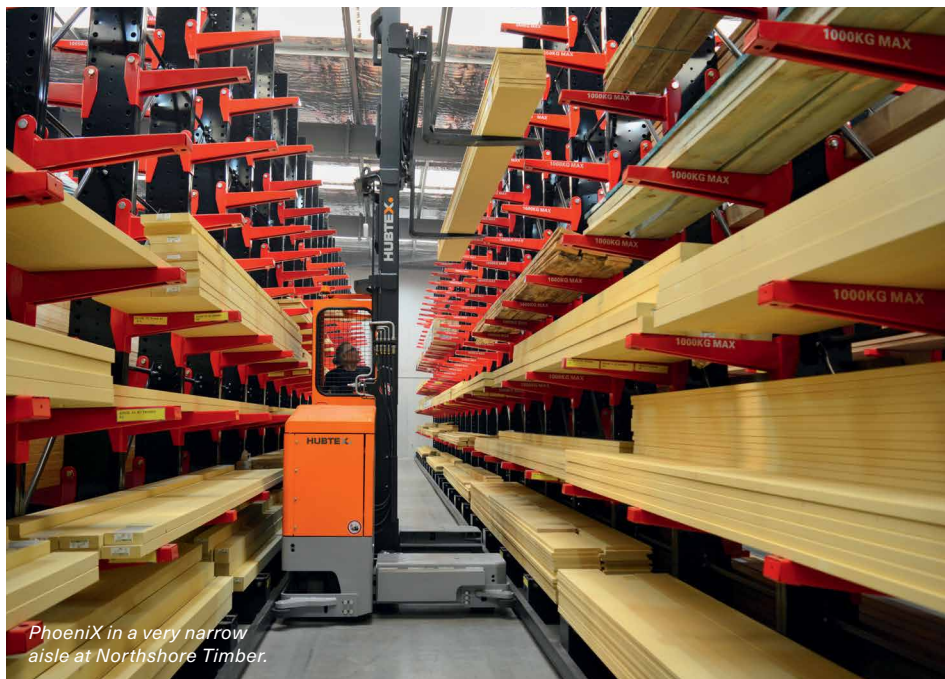
The results, Bruce says, speak for themselves. In some cases, the combination of cantilever racking and a side-loader have paid for itself purely through the damage it prevented. "We've had cases where the rack system and side loaders together have been paid for out of the damage that they previously were getting," he said.

SQUEEZING MORE FROM EVERY SQUARE METRE

If damage is the quiet cost, space is the loud one. Land prices, particularly around Sydney and Melbourne, have pushed many long-established timber yards into difficult relocation decisions, and Bruce sees this pressure only intensifying. "I've seen a lot of well-established timber yards that have had to move," he said, "and it's such a difficult decision because the land... availability is the one key thing."



Above: Guidance systems support precise and efficient operation in narrow aisles.



Phoenix in a very narrow aisle at Northshore Timber.

conventional forklifts, then yes, 100% is achievable, no problem at all," he said. "Generally, we find if we're just narrowing down aisles and making tweaks and adjustments, then 40% is quite realistic."

MULTIDIRECTIONAL MOVEMENT: A DIFFERENT WAY TO TRAVEL

Underpinning both the damage-reduction and space-saving story is the Phoenix's multidirectional steering, the ability to drive forward, sideways and diagonally, and to rotate on the spot. "You don't have to swing the load," Bruce said. "When you turn, you can move the whole machine diagonally... we can drive out, spin around on the spot and go straight back in."

On Hubtex's HX steering system (360 degrees steering), operators can change direction while still moving, flipping a lever >>

Customised solutions for Australia's timber yards.

The response has been twofold: build up, and narrow the aisles. Where timber warehouses once topped out around six metres, Bruce says eight and a half metres is now common, and Hubtex has fitted trucks with lift heights as high as 14 metres. The aisle-width side of the equation is where the multi-directional design earns its keep. "I think the key one there is narrow aisles," Bruce said. "We start with an aisle that's about 2.5 metres for a standard 1200 pack. Conventional forklift, you're going to be looking at around 8 metres."

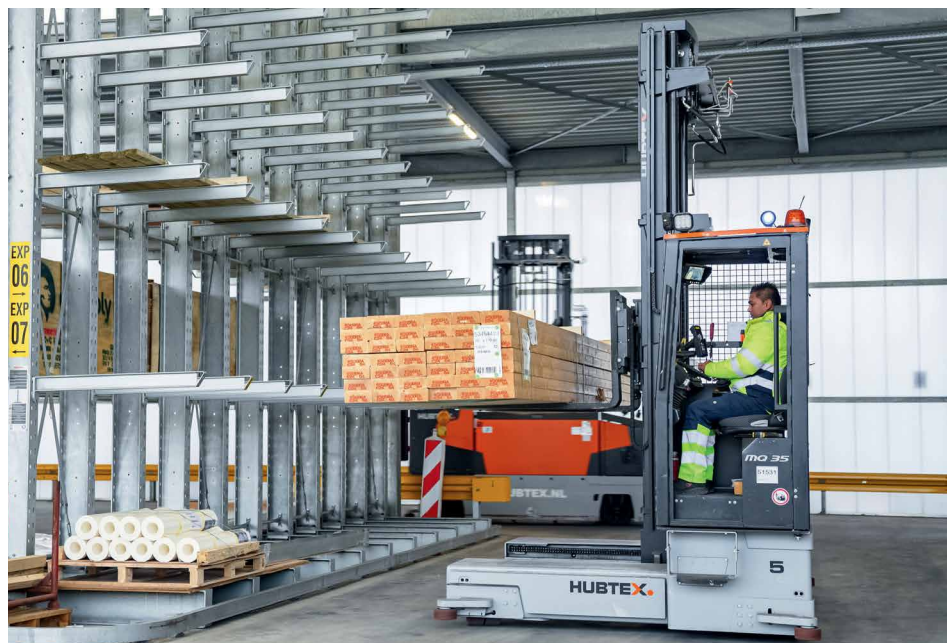
That gap comes down to how each machine travels. A conventional forklift carrying a long pack across its width needs the length of the product plus a safety margin to move down an aisle. The Phoenix, travelling with the load parallel to the machine, only needs its own width. "We travel with the product parallel to the machine," Bruce explained. "You need the width of the machine, really, and that's it."

Pushed to its limits, Hubtex has engineered aisles as narrow as 1.9 metres, using a 600-millimetre configuration, the smallest the company has built, along with stand-up cabin options for operators doing a lot of getting on and off the machine. The more popular choice for this style of work, however, is a cross-facing cabin.

The combined effect on capacity can be dramatic. Bruce is careful to point out that results depend heavily on the starting point. "If you're currently handling with



Above: Electric sideloaders provide flexible timber handling both indoors and outdoors.



Above: Electric operation provides emission-free handling.

to smoothly transition from travelling sideways to a new direction without stopping. "This saves time, because you don't need to stop and take six or seven seconds to change direction, the machine does it automatically," Bruce said, a feature that also reduces tyre wear and energy use.

POWER, SAFETY AND THE ELECTRIC ADVANTAGE

The Phoenix's electric drivetrain adds another dimension to the safety and efficiency conversation, particularly for businesses operating indoors or in mixed environments. Beyond the obvious emissions benefit, Bruce points to a change he's witnessed firsthand among operators. Six months after installing electric machines at one site, he recalled operators thanking him because they were "not stressed and no longer had headache," no longer breathing in the fumes and soot that used to coat product handled by diesel or gas-powered trucks.

Battery technology has also moved on considerably. Lithium-ion batteries, Bruce says, can be topped up throughout the day rather than requiring a full overnight charge, effectively removing the old constraint of forgetting to charge a battery overnight and losing the use of a machine the next day. With an expected battery life of eight to ten years, it's also reshaping how customers think about long-term rental and ownership costs.

REAL-WORLD RESULTS: NORTSHORE TIMBERS

Asked for an example of the Phoenix solving a genuine handling challenge, Bruce didn't hesitate to point to Northshore Timbers, a customer Hubtex has worked with for three decades. Their order-picking system, built

around picking from the first three rack levels by hand cart and replenishing from above, was ahead of its time, and the site's discipline around maintenance and organisation has kept two machines running reliably for 24 years, machines Hubtex has only recently replaced. It's a relationship Bruce clearly takes pride in, and one that illustrates how a well-designed layout and a well-maintained fleet reinforce each other over the long term.

LOOKING AHEAD: AUTOMATION AND SMARTER WAREHOUSES

Bruce expects automation to play an increasing role in timber handling, though he's realistic about the added complexity compared with uniform, palletised freight. "Once you throw in timber, there's so many variables that you need to account for," he said, which is why vision and guidance systems tailored specifically to timber will remain critical. Semi-automation, barcode and QR-based warehouse control, and vision systems capable of working to millimetre tolerances are all, in his view, "creeping in" and set to become standard rather than novel.

EVALUATING THE INVESTMENT

Bruce has watched the way customers weigh up a purchase change considerably over the years. The old habit of comparing ticket prices against a conventional forklift, he says, is a losing argument for a machine built to this level of complexity. "It always used to be that the customer would look at the ticket price," he explained, "which is an argument we're never going to win. We're a much more complex and heavy-duty machine specifically designed."

That's shifted towards a more considered approach, with customers increasingly

digging into after-sales support and the total cost of ownership across the life of the machine, rather than the number on day one. Bruce welcomes the change, and says it tends to flag the customers who understand their own business best. Timber businesses also need to think beyond what they're handling today, given how quickly product ranges evolve, and factor in the rising value of the timber itself, which raises the stakes on how carefully it's stored and moved.

For a business weighing up whether to upgrade at all, Bruce suggests starting with an honest look in the mirror: is existing equipment causing damage, what growth is planned, how much more stock needs to be carried, and will the warehouse need extra space for order picking and assembly down the track. From there, he says, local support becomes critical, plenty of equipment arrives in Australia "sold off a brochure, with very little local support," leaving customers stranded when something goes wrong years down the line.

Even lead times factor into the equation. A customised Phoenix typically takes 28 to 30 weeks from order to delivery, though Hubtex keeps a number of standard configurations on hand that can turn around in as little as four weeks, alongside hire and second-hand options for businesses that can't wait.

THE BOTTOM LINE

For businesses weighing up an investment of this scale, Bruce's advice is to look well beyond the sticker price. Total cost of ownership, local support, spare parts availability and the reliability of the machine over five, ten or fifteen years all matter more than the number on the quote (for information on Hubtex's after sales service, see the editorial on page 26 of the May/June issue of Timber Trader News). Above all, he frames the decision as strategic rather than transactional: "This is a machine which is going to be at the heart of their business," he said, "and if it does stop or is not productive or efficient, it is going to severely impact their business."

With roughly 400 Phoenix units now working across Australian timber yards, and a design philosophy that starts and ends with the product itself, it's a machine that has quietly become part of the industry's daily rhythm — reducing damage, reclaiming space, and giving timber businesses room to grow without having to find a bigger block of land. **T**

For more information please visit: <https://hubtex.com.au/> or scan the QR code.



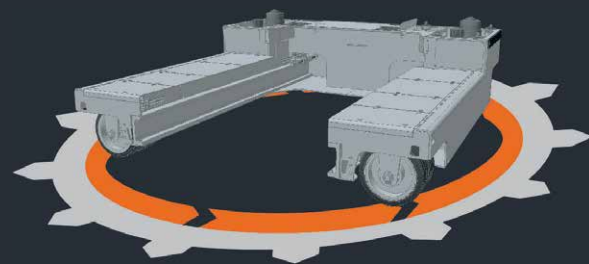
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Global shipping update

Navigating another period of uncertainty. **By Rina McLaughlin**

While many believed global supply chains were beginning to stabilise following 21 weeks of geopolitical conflict, the shipping industry remains uncertain across multiple areas.

Rather than a single event driving market instability, today's challenges are being shaped by a combination of geopolitical conflict, changing trade policies, rising operational costs, evolving environmental regulations and continued pressure on global port infrastructure.

For Australian and New Zealand importers and exporters, these issues are magnified by our geographic location at the end of global supply chains, making reliability, planning and visibility more important than ever.

MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT CONTINUES TO DISRUPT GLOBAL SHIPPING

The Red Sea and Strait of Hormuz remain two of the world's most strategically important maritime corridors.

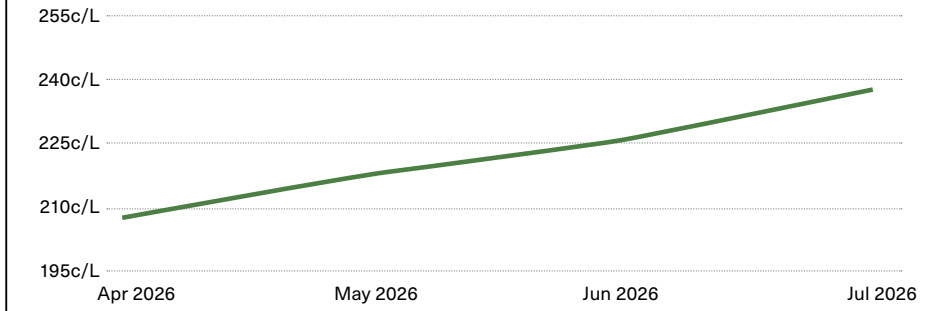
Although shipping through these regions has not ceased entirely, ongoing security threats have resulted in many major container carriers continuing to avoid the Suez Canal in favour of routing vessels around the Cape of Good Hope.

Recent Houthi attacks on commercial shipping and the introduction of additional security measures have reinforced carriers' cautious approach, while war-risk insurance premiums remain more than double 2024-2025 levels.

The impact, however, extends well beyond the immediate conflict.

Longer sailing distances have effectively removed vessel capacity from the global

Approx. national average retail diesel prices over the past four months



Above: Representative national averages compiled from public reporting and market trends actual prices vary by location and retailer.

fleet, creating tighter equipment availability, equipment imbalance, reducing schedule reliability and increasing operating costs across almost every major trade lane.

For Australian importers this means:

- Longer and less predictable transit times.
- Increased Emergency Bunker Surcharges (EBS or EFS), Peak Season Surcharges (PSS) and Security Risk Surcharges.
- Ongoing pressure on shipping schedules and equipment availability.
- Higher insurance and fuel costs being passed through the supply chain.
- Congestion in major transshipment ports such as Singapore, Port Klang, Tanjung Pelapas.

RISING FUEL COSTS CONTINUE TO PRESSURE AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND SUPPLY CHAINS

Fuel remains one of the most significant cost drivers throughout the logistics industry, influencing every stage of the supply chain—

from international shipping and container transport through to warehousing and final-mile delivery.

Australia and New Zealand are particularly exposed because both countries rely heavily on imported refined petroleum products. Recent geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and increased insurance costs for tanker movements have contributed to these increases, which ultimately flow through to freight rates and the landed cost of imported goods.

For Australian businesses, the recent conclusion of temporary fuel excise relief has added further upward pressure to fuel prices at the pump. Combined with higher international oil prices, many transport operators have increased fuel levies.

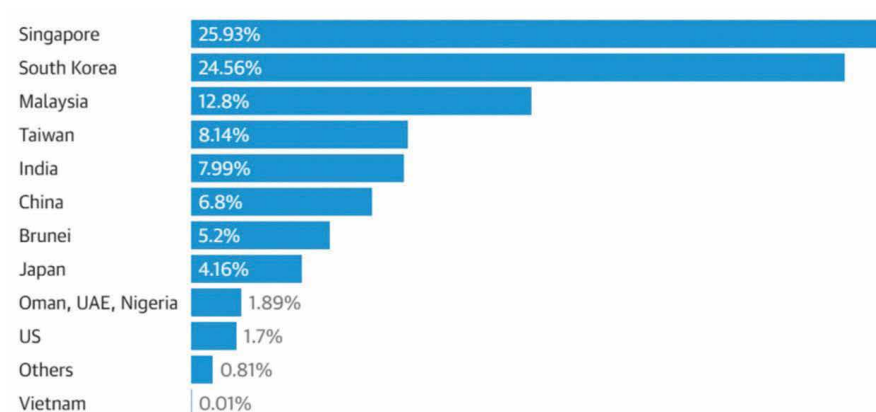
In New Zealand, import costs remain heavily influenced by international shipping markets. As an island nation dependent on imported refined fuel, increases in global shipping costs, tanker insurance and exchange rate movements continue to affect wholesale fuel prices before flowing through to transport operators and consumers. (Commerce Commission)

Businesses should expect fuel surcharges to remain an important component of freight pricing throughout the remainder of 2026. Maintaining accurate freight forecasting, reviewing transport contracts regularly and consolidating shipments wherever possible will help minimise the impact of fuel volatility.

Despite these challenges, both Australia and New Zealand continue to maintain stable fuel supplies, with current pressures largely affecting pricing rather than availability. The focus for supply chain professionals remains managing cost volatility while maintaining service reliability for clientele.

Where our fuel imports come from

Share of Australia's total refined fuel imports by country of origin (%)





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CAPACITY & BLANK SAILINGS

Schedule recovery is driving blank sailings, rolling and tighter booking windows

~7%

global sailing
cancellation rate

5-6

weeks of blank
sailings expected
to continue

35

days advance
booking now
requested by lines

3

weeks lull time
currently at
Singapore

- Blank sailings and omissions are increasing supply/demand imbalance and rolling, space and equipment remain in high demand - prebook in advance.
- Lines are now requesting bookings up to 35 days ahead of the intended sailing.

- Importers are front-loading cargo, compounding space and equipment pressure across the trade.
- Carriers continue to target schedule recovery over the next 5-8 weeks; expect continued delays and rolling at origin in the interim.

SOURCE: ADM GLOBAL

PORT CONGESTION RETURNS

Port congestion has again become a significant challenge.

As carriers divert vessels around Africa, major transshipment hubs including Singapore, Port Klang, Tanjung Pelepas, Jebel Ali and several Indian ports are experiencing increased vessel bunching and longer berth waiting times.

Even ports that are not directly affected by geopolitical conflict are experiencing delays due to network disruption and vessel schedule recovery programmes. This continues to reduce schedule reliability and creates rolling delays throughout global shipping networks.

FREIGHT RATES REMAIN HIGHLY VOLATILE

Unlike the sustained freight rate increases experienced during COVID-19, today's market is characterised by rapid volatility.

Rates continue to fluctuate depending on trade lane, carrier capacity, geopolitical developments and customer demand. Importers are also bringing forward shipments (front loading) ahead of changing services, creating temporary spikes in demand and tightening available vessel space.

While global vessel supply has increased significantly over the past two years (3.1 million TEU), much of this additional capacity is being absorbed by longer voyage distances and operational disruption.

With the introduction of Peak Season Surcharges, fortnightly GRIs (General Rate Increases), War Risk Surcharges, Congestion Surcharges and Emergency Fuel Surcharges, market volatility is near impossible to predict and manage. The result is a freight market where rates can change quickly with little warning.

On top of global disruptions and ongoing geopolitical volatility, there is a reduction of Asia-Pacific capacity including blank sailings, omissions and phasing out of larger vessels

into the AU/NZ trade. It has created a false economy and driven up supply and demand, supporting the ongoing rate and surcharge increases, hitting the highest levels since COVID-19.

FORWARD PROCUREMENT PLANNING

Although the global shipping industry has demonstrated remarkable resilience, uncertainty is likely to remain throughout the balance of 2026.

Businesses should continue to focus on:

- Earlier booking of shipments – carriers are requesting a minimum of 35 days advance bookings.
- Building additional inventory where appropriate.
- Diversifying suppliers and shipping routes.
- Maintaining close communication with logistics providers.
- Monitoring geopolitical developments that may influence freight costs and transit times.

The companies that remain flexible and proactive will be best positioned to manage ongoing disruption while maintaining reliable supply chains for customers.

Rina McLaughlin Commercial Manager – ADM Global. For more information contact ADM Global on 0433 224 685 or via email at rina.mclaughlin@admglobal.com.au



AUSTRALIA LANDSIDE DEVELOPMENTS AND UPDATES

Against the backdrop of the Strait of Hormuz crisis, ongoing Red Sea disruptions and Black Sea/Danube drought conditions, Australia and New Zealand importers/exporters face a particularly acute recipe of circumstances given their position at the far end of global supply chains, geographically.

Key points to note:

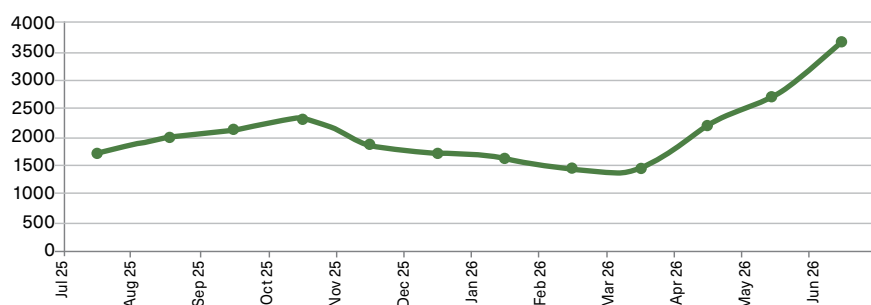
- Domestic infrastructure investment continues in major ports such as Port Kembla and Newcastle, supporting throughput resilience.
- Port of Newcastle automated container terminal is in development to have a throughput of 2 million TEU.
- Regulatory tightening — including enhanced customs audits and evolving compliance standards such as due diligence reforms — remains an area for careful planning as 2026 unfolds.

Preparing early for these shifts can insulate compliance risk and minimise unexpected operational constraints.

- Carriers have announced increases to Australian Terminal Handling Charges effective 1st of September 2026 further increasing the cost of importing and exporting.
- WSI (Western Sydney International Airport) has welcomed its inaugural cargo freighter on the 27th of July, marking the first throughput into the new airport. Freighter flights + passenger flights are due to commence in October 2026.

Understanding these evolving dynamics and planning proactively can help importers and exporters navigate the volatility of global supply chain. **T**

Asia-Australia Spot Rate Index (\$/FEU, indicative)



Above: Net Movement: Asia-Australia spot rates have more than doubled over the period (~+115%), with the steepest rise driven by the Apr-Jun 2026 Middle East surcharge wave.

SOURCE: DREWRY WCI

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Time to consider the limits

How close should you go? **By George Dolezal - Principal Engineer, Meyer Timber Pty Ltd.**

Everything in life has limits. These can be self-imposed such as how close you walk along the edge of a high cliff. Some people will walk near the edge, and others would keep further away. Or the limits can be enforced upon us such as the speed limit for driving on the road. But we still have a choice on whether we abide by these and how far we push the boundaries. Timber design is no different with respect to limits. If we use the example of a floor joist for the first part of this article, there are normally two design checks done. One is for strength which checks if the joist will break or not. The other is for serviceability which looks at the deflections and makes sure it does not affect the overall structure or look aesthetically displeasing.

Most timber members are governed by serviceability. This is a good outcome as they usually have a lot of reserve in strength when their design is limited by deflection. The NCC has some information on serviceability limits and timber design standards such as AS 1720.3 have design limits. The dead load deflection for a floor joist in AS 1720.3 is limited to span/300 but not greater than 15mm. Note that the dead load in this case includes a portion of live load, taken as "Permanent live load". So how close should you go to this deflection limit?

A lot of builders will say to you "I don't want my joists to deflect any more than 8mm". This is a mistaken premise and can lead to issues. A joist spanning 2.4m can have a maximum deflection of span/300 or

"Serviceability looks at the deflections and makes sure it does not affect the overall structure or look aesthetically displeasing."

8mm, so taking this request on face value would have the joist at 100% of the serviceability criteria. A better way to tackle this would be to say that you want the deflection at 80% of the maximum span ratio, which would limit the deflection of the 2.4m span joist to 6.4mm. If you take this 80% value in combination with maximum 15mm, then you would limit your deflection to 12mm rather than the maximum of 15mm for a joist of span 4.5m and above. It is wise to consider the consequences of this, especially with houses getting more open plan so joist spans are increasing. A 6.0m span joist will be limited to 12mm, which is span/500 and a lot tighter tolerance than AS 1720.3. The Australian Standard loading code (AS/NZS 1170.0) has suggested span limits in Appendix C, but no maximum values, and for floor joists the dead load deflection matches AS 1720.3 at span/300. So, could we massage the limits to be slightly conservative at span/375 which is 80% of span/300 to a maximum of "say" 16mm which is a 6m joist? The associated deflections are shown in Table 1 for reference and create for a better sliding scale in today's joist span environment, whilst only having overall deflection on long span joists increase by 1mm. These values could work for general areas where there is a run of joists, but there will still be circumstances where you can go even closer to the limits.

A common scenario for this is where there is a run of joists across the back of a house, where you also have a central hallway. The common joist span may be 5.0m but the hallway steps in 600mm before the support point so you have 2 joists in the middle with a 5.6m span. In this case it would be acceptable for the longer span joists to approach closer to the limit as there are only a couple of them, as long as the other joists use your normal criteria.

All we have discussed so far is dead load deflection on floor joists. Probably the more important design check is for floor dynamics, where a 1kN point load is placed at mid span for a maximum deflection of 2mm. This has been developed and works for solid sections up to a 6m span. For larger spans and other sections such as I-Joists (where shear deflection is higher), tighter limits should be imposed. Again, how close should you go to this limit to ensure a suitable floor performance? And again, the answer is "it depends". A heavy floor like a tiled bathroom will have more dampening and thus less bounce so you can go closer to the 2mm limit, whereas a large open area with no furniture should be designed more conservatively as there will be a higher level of resonance. All the above has highlighted that a good floor detailer will not just look at the outputs of the program but will also assess the layout and floor loadings for the specific home to determine where they can go closer to the limit and where they need to be careful.

And what about the serviceability limits of other members? For wind uplift, rafters have a maximum deflection of 20mm, and roof beams a maximum deflection of 30mm. This may seem a lot although there is a reason for this. At peak serviceability wind loads (94km/hr in an N2 wind classification), anyone inside the house is not really looking at the roof members and thinking they are deflecting too much. They are more likely hiding under the bed or in the bathroom doorway. Wind beams are another example and one which I disagree on. These were added when AS 1720.3 was published in



Above: Figure 1 – Testing shows serviceability normally governs over strength.

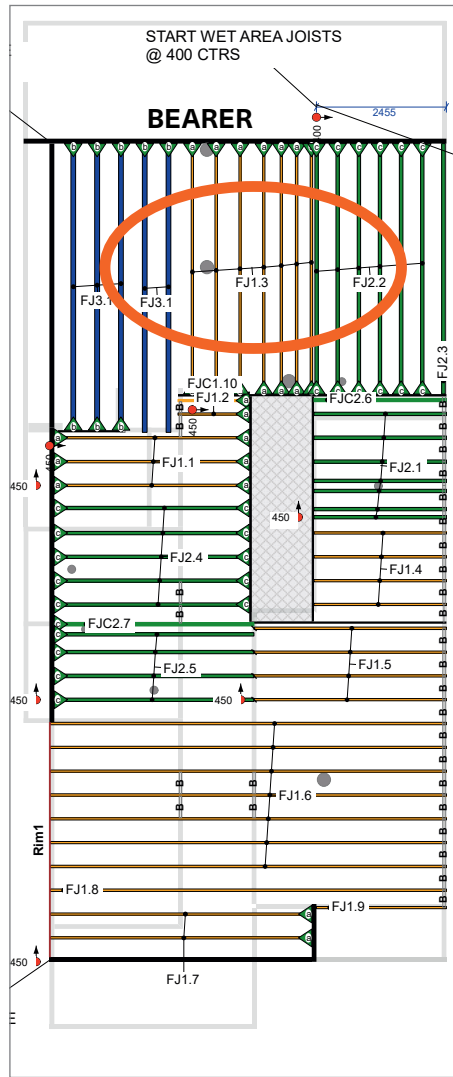
Single Span (mm)	2250mm	3000mm	3750mm	4500mm	5250mm	6000mm
AS 1720.3 maximum deflection (Span/300 but < 15mm)	7.5	10	12.5	15	15	15
Suggested maximum deflection (Span/375 but < 16mm)	6	8	10	12	14	16

Above: Table 1: Comparison of deflection limits between AS 1720.3 and proposed responsible design.

2016 and the maximum deflection criteria is limited to span/200 but not greater than 15mm. So, a 3m span wind beam can deflect 15mm and a 5m span wind beam is also not allowed to deflect more than 15mm which seems too stringent. And this is under the same wind speed noted above where everyone is hiding under the bed. Personally, I would not put a limit on these members, or it would be higher at something like at least 20mm to match the limits on wall studs.

The last item to consider is any system effects, like cumulative deflections which have been talked about in previous articles. Let's look at a long span joist connected to a long span bearer (Figure 2). The bearer can deflect 12mm and the joist can deflect 15mm. This means the centre of the joist is actually 21mm below the level floor plane if they both deflect to their limits. Is this suitable? As with everything else, it depends on the home design, sight lines, and what is under the large open area. The designer needs to assess this and make a decision on suitability.

We have talked about serviceability almost entirely in this article. The final thing to note would be that when the design is limited by strength, care should be taken in ensuring there is a factor of safety in the beam design. A strength failure can result in the beam breaking which could have serious safety implications. Or it could result in a bearing failure



Above: Figure 2 – Cumulative deflections can occur in areas like those highlighted in red.

“A better way to tackle this would be to say that you want the deflection at 80% of the maximum span ratio.”

(crushing at supports) which can normally be resolved but will be costly. In those cases where you do see a design governed by strength, it is prudent to stay far away from the limits, so you don't get bitten – just like swimming with sharks.

Limits in timber member design are intended to keep the occupants safe whilst also having an acceptable level of amenity and performance. They have been developed over the years to match the expectations of those who live in the homes. The level to which you approach those limits depends on the house design, loading, and span of the members. This is built by experience in timber design and knowing how the member performs. This is the same as the limits in day-to-day life. As anyone who has had a speeding ticket can attest to, the risk versus reward can be costly. If done with a holistic view, good timber design can save money for the builder by knowing where to push the limits. **T**



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Synthetic plans built for the jobsite



A new solution arrives for Australia's frame and truss sector. **By Campbell McInnes**

For frame and truss businesses, the challenge begins well before a plan reaches the construction site. Detailed PDF drawings are the foundation of modern manufacturing, guiding fabrication accuracy and ensuring components are produced correctly the first time. However, those same documents must then survive transport, handling and installation in environments where exposure to rain, mud, dust, oils and general site contamination is common.

When plans become damaged, faded or difficult to read, the consequences can extend beyond inconvenience. Builders may lose valuable time, installation decisions can be delayed, and the risk of errors increases.

For an industry built around precision, ensuring plans remain clear from the factory floor through to the job site is essential.

The Australian building industry is built on precision. From architectural drawings and engineering plans through to manufacturing schedules and installation details, accurate documentation is critical to keeping projects moving safely and efficiently.

Yet, one of the most important tools on a construction site remains surprisingly vulnerable: the humble paper plan.

For decades, builders, frame and truss manufacturers, and trades have relied on printed drawings that are often exposed to some of the harshest conditions imaginable.

Rain, wind, dust, moisture, handling damage and general site wear can quickly turn an essential document into an unreadable piece of paper. When plans become damaged or illegible, productivity suffers, mistakes become more likely, and replacement costs add unnecessary pressure to already demanding construction schedules.

Recognising this ongoing challenge, Synthetic Papers has entered the Australian frame and truss market with a robust printing solution designed specifically for demanding environments.

Led by Managing Director Peter Haszard, Synthetic Papers is introducing a range of high-performance synthetic printing papers

that provide builders, timber merchants, architects and manufacturers with a tougher, longer-lasting alternative to conventional paper and laminated documents.

DURABLE DOCUMENTATION DESIGNED FOR CONSTRUCTION ENVIRONMENTS

Synthetic Papers supplies advanced polymeric-coated printing papers manufactured by global leaders in materials technology. The range is engineered to withstand the conditions where traditional paper struggles, delivering durable, clear, and reliable printed documents from the manufacturer to the building site.

Unlike ordinary paper, Synthetic Papers' products are waterproof, tear-resistant and resistant to abrasion, oils and most solvents. This makes them ideally suited for applications including building plans, frame and truss drawings, identification tags, site notices, diagrams and other critical construction documentation.

For frame and truss manufacturers, where drawings and identification information must remain clear throughout production, transport and installation, document resilience is more than a convenience: it is a productivity advantage.

"Construction documentation needs to perform in the same environment as the people relying on it," says Peter Haszard. "If a plan is damaged by weather or handling, the consequences can be delays, confusion and costly errors. Our goal is to provide a practical solution that keeps information clear and available when it is needed most."

BETTER THAN LAMINATING: FASTER, EASIER AND MORE COST- EFFECTIVE

Many businesses have traditionally attempted to protect important plans by laminating standard paper. While this provides some additional protection, it also introduces limitations.

Durable plans designed for demanding construction environments.

While lamination has been the traditional approach to protecting important drawings, it is not without limitations. Multi-sheet plan sets can become heavier and more difficult to handle, while damaged or ageing laminated documents can suffer from edge deterioration and moisture entering between the layers. The process also adds additional labour and material costs to every sheet produced.

Synthetic Papers' experience indicates that businesses can achieve significant savings by moving away from the traditional print-and-laminate process. As an example, an A3 plan printed on standard paper and laminated may cost approximately \$4.54 per sheet, compared with approximately \$1.81 for the same plan printed directly onto SRF PAPLAR Synthetic Paper. Actual costs will vary between businesses, but the comparison highlights the potential efficiency gains available through removing lamination from the workflow.

Laminated documents can be bulky, difficult to handle, expensive to produce and time-consuming to replace. They can also create issues with storage, disposal and recycling at the end of their useful life.

Synthetic Papers provides a simpler alternative: a ready-to-print durable sheet that removes the need for the additional lamination process.

The result is a document that is easier to produce and handle, and that delivers excellent print quality without the added steps, equipment and labour associated with laminating.

For businesses managing large volumes of drawings and documentation, these efficiencies can quickly add up.

Synthetic Papers' products are available in a range of weights and formats, from A5 through to A3 and SRA3 sheets, as well as roll formats for specialised applications. The papers are designed for digital and laser printers, allowing businesses to print resilient documents using existing equipment rather than investing in specialised systems.

RELIABLE PRINTING WITH EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS

A key consideration for any new printing medium is whether it can integrate seamlessly into existing workflows. Synthetic Papers' SRF PAPLAR 166gsm Synthetic Paper has been engineered specifically for demanding construction applications, allowing frame and truss businesses to produce durable documentation using their existing digital and laser printing equipment.

Designed for reliable performance, the material runs smoothly through compatible printers, supports double-sided printing and delivers sharp, high-quality results from its matte printable surface. It is also designed to minimise common printing concerns such as static-related feeding issues when correctly stored and handled.

The synthetic paper range provides dimensional stability, meaning sheets maintain their shape and size despite exposure to changing environmental conditions. This is particularly important in construction environments where accuracy matters and documents may be exposed to temperature fluctuations, moisture, and repeated handling.

The papers can also be written on using suitable pens and pencils, allowing builders, installers, and supervisors to make notes, mark-up changes and record site information directly on the document. »



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Chemical Resistant

Resistant to most solvents.



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SRF Paplar papers cannot be torn no matter how hard you try.



Oil Resistant

Oil and Petrol has no effect on SRF Paplar synthetic paper.



Drawable

Make comments, edits and annotations easily.

The combination of print quality, durability and practicality makes synthetic paper a valuable option for anyone who needs plans and information to remain readable throughout the construction process.

PROVEN PERFORMANCE WITH MILLIONS OF IDENTIFICATION TAGS DELIVERED

While Synthetic Papers is a new supplier to Australia's frame and truss market, the technology behind the product is already proven across demanding industries.

The same paper technology used for Pryda Identification Tags has already seen more than 6.5 million units delivered, demonstrating its reliability in applications where durability and long-term readability are essential. Manufactured by SRF Ltd, a global materials technology company employing more than 9,000 people across 16 locations, PAPLAR Synthetic Paper is produced to internationally recognised quality standards.

Synthetic Papers partners with leading global manufacturers, including SRF and Toppan, organisations recognised internationally for innovation in chemical, fibre, film and advanced materials technologies.

These partnerships provide Australian customers with access to established manufacturing expertise, supported by local supply and service.

With stock held in Victoria, Synthetic Papers can provide delivery throughout Australia within approximately two to four business days, helping businesses maintain supply continuity and respond quickly to project requirements.

SUPPORTING A MORE EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The construction industry continues to look for practical ways to reduce waste, improve

efficiency and operate more sustainably.

While durability is the primary advantage of synthetic paper, there are also environmental benefits associated with extending the useful life of printed materials.

Documents that survive longer require fewer replacements, reducing unnecessary printing, wasted materials and repeated handling. By eliminating the need for laminating standard paper, businesses can also avoid the additional materials and processing associated with producing laminated documents.

For an industry where thousands of plans, tags and notices may be printed every year, small improvements in document longevity can contribute to meaningful reductions in waste.

Sustainability is increasingly about making smarter choices, selecting products that perform better, last longer and reduce the resources required throughout their lifecycle.

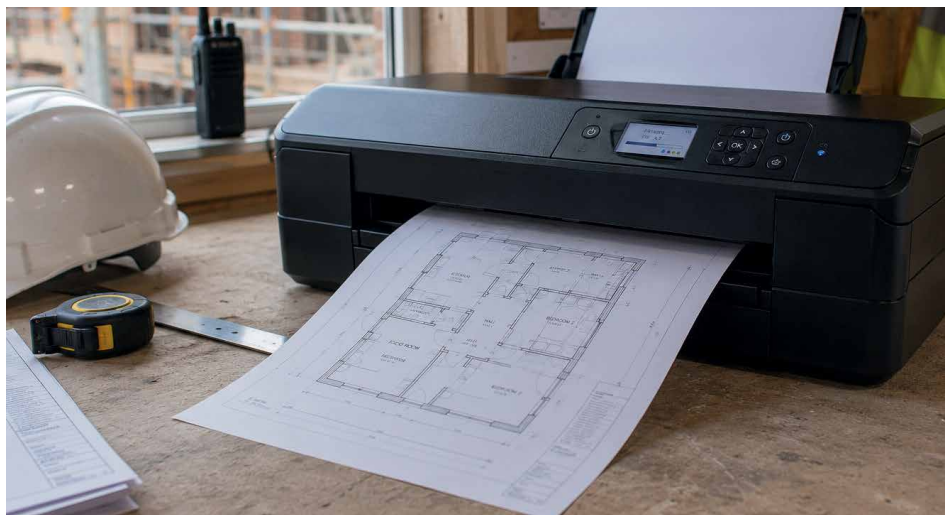
A PRACTICAL INNOVATION FOR THE AUSTRALIAN BUILDING SECTOR

The arrival of Synthetic Papers into the Australian frame and truss market represents a timely innovation for an industry that depends on accuracy, efficiency and reliability.

From architects and housing companies preparing documentation, through to frame and truss manufacturers producing components and builders installing them on-site, every stage of construction relies on information being available and readable.

By combining robust, print performance, cost efficiency and fast local supply, Synthetic Papers provides a practical solution to a long-standing industry challenge.

In a sector where every delay matters and every detail counts, stronger documentation can help build stronger outcomes. **T**



The Values That Built Multinail Are Still Building The Future

Celebrating Peter Taylor,
FTMA Industry Icon Award recipient.

Peter Taylor's recognition celebrates more than 50 years of contribution to the frame and truss industry – and the values that continue to guide Multinail today.

For Multinail, those values mean supporting Australian fabricators through local support, personalised partnerships and progressive solutions for the future.



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Real people.
Real support.
Long-term partnerships.



LOCAL

Australian-owned.
Local support.
Built for Australian fabricators.



PROGRESSIVE

Advanced machinery.
Smarter software and systems.
Future-ready fabrication.



FTMA Australia

Finally, we may have the tool government has been waiting for. **By Kersten Gentle**

For years, Australia's forest and wood products industry has argued that timber has a vital role to play in reducing the carbon footprint of our built environment.

- The science has been there.
- The evidence has been there.
- The international research has been there.

Yet despite Australia's commitment at COP28, alongside 16 other countries to increase the use of timber in construction as a practical way of reducing emissions, meaningful policy change has been slow to follow.

At FTMA Australia, we have often asked ourselves one simple question. Why?

Perhaps the answer is that governments have lacked the practical tools needed to confidently compare the carbon impacts of different construction systems and make informed policy decisions.

If that is the missing piece, then we believe we are about to change that.

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

FTMA Australia is incredibly proud that our National Research & Technical Manager, Rhianna Robinson will lead the newly funded Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) research project, Timber-led Decarbonisation of Australian Housing, in partnership with the University of the Sunshine Coast's Centre for Sustainable Futures.

This isn't simply another research project. It has the potential to become one of the most important pieces of work undertaken for Australia's lightweight timber framing industry.

The objective is straightforward: create an easy-to-use, evidence-based embodied carbon calculator that enables meaningful comparisons between construction systems and demonstrates the long-term carbon benefits of timber housing.

Importantly, this is not about promoting one product over another. It is about giving governments, builders, designers, regulators and consumers access to credible, transparent information that allows better decisions to be made.

For too long, discussions around embodied carbon have been complicated, inconsistent and often inaccessible to the people making decisions. This project aims to change that.



Above: Tom Petty (CarbonTrace) and Rhianna Robinson (FTMA).

Rhianna Robinson will lead the newly funded Australian Forest and Wood Innovations (AFWI) research project, Timber-led Decarbonisation of Australian Housing, in partnership with the University of the Sunshine Coast's Centre for Sustainable Futures.

When someone chooses a timber-framed home, they are not simply selecting a structural system. They are choosing a building material that stores carbon throughout the life of the building while avoiding many of the emissions associated with more carbon-intensive alternatives.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Being able to clearly measure and communicate those benefits has enormous implications.

If governments genuinely want to reduce emissions from Australia's built environment, they need practical tools that quantify those outcomes. We believe this project will provide exactly that. It also comes at a critical time.

Australia faces the dual challenge of building hundreds of thousands of new homes while simultaneously reducing national emissions. Those two objectives should not compete with each other. They should work together.

The lightweight timber frame and truss



Imagine the impact if governments could clearly see the emissions reductions achieved every time timber replaces higher embodied carbon materials.

industry already manufactures the structural backbone of around 80 per cent of Australia's detached housing. Every day, manufacturers across the country are delivering prefabricated structural systems that are efficient, renewable and capable of supporting faster, more sustainable housing outcomes.

Imagine the impact if governments could clearly see the emissions reductions achieved every time timber replaces materials with higher embodied carbon.

Imagine if housing policy, procurement decisions and planning incentives were supported by robust Australian evidence rather than assumptions.

That is why FTMA Australia is so excited about this project.

It has the potential to move the conversation beyond opinion and into measurable outcomes.

The project also reinforces the growing leadership role our industry is playing in research and innovation.

Having FTMA Australia's own National Research & Technical Manager leading a nationally significant AFWI project demonstrates that our industry is not simply responding to change; it is helping drive it.

Rhianna Robinson brings extensive

technical knowledge, practical industry experience and an unwavering commitment to ensuring research delivers real outcomes for manufacturers and the broader timber sector.

We congratulate Rhianna on leading this important work and acknowledge the outstanding collaboration between the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australian Forest and Wood Innovations, CarbonTrace and Project Partners as well as everyone who contributed to bringing the project together.

THE REAL WORK BEGINS NOW

Over the coming months the research team will engage with industry, government and technical experts to develop a practical tool that has the potential to influence policy, support better building decisions and help Australia honour its international commitment to reducing emissions through greater use of timber.

At FTMA Australia, we believe this project represents more than research. It is an opportunity to give decision-makers the evidence they need to put timber at the centre of Australia's low-carbon housing future. **T**



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Roof investigation 101

A brief crawl through failure. **By Paul Davis**

I have written many times about things going wrong with trusses: I have seen catastrophic collapse events, non-events, buckling, fracture, sagging, warping, rotting, lightning strikes, rusting, fires, and termites having a good feed.

In recent times, I've written about the spate of plate ejection failures that we have been seeing come through our business. It's been something like a cross between a slasher horror genre and a detective series – but in the timber industry!

So, as someone working in the truss game, you may well ask (you were going to ask, weren't you) how does Paul go about investigating a typical problem roof? Thanks for your interest; here's what I do:

INVESTIGATION PROCESS

My very first stop, always, is to get a verbal history of what is and has happened. I'll do that from the first call. Because, sometimes, people tell me they are hearing cracking sounds at night, or plasterboard cracking is getting worse on a daily basis, or ceiling sags are getting worse every day.



Above: Owners first signs to a potential problem, are sometimes seen from the inside of the house.

I don't want to be the guy who was doing administration, quoting a job while someone died from a collapsed roof. So, if there is a suggestion that damage is progressing rapidly, my advice is to get the hell out of the building and stay there until we inspect; a collapse occurs two ways, slowly at first, then suddenly!

There is another reason to get a verbal history – it may give you a clue as to what is going on. If a roof is reported as sagging since the day it was built some decades ago it was probably some sort of erection defect. For instance, it may be that the fabricated truss geometry didn't match the as-constructed house geometry and the sag is a result of the truss erector fudging it. On the other hand, if a roof has been good for decades, then suddenly starts showing distress it's probable that some weakness has effectively aged out and is in the process of failing. Prioritise your investigations accordingly.

SITE INSPECTION

Upon attending the site, I'll first do a walk around the building and see if I can sight any sagging roof planes from outside. A sagging hip end can often just be sagging jack rafters, but a dip in a main roof plane often spells trouble.

Then, before getting in the roof space, my next step is to try and work out if there is actually a clear problem with the trusses. As I have written about previously, sometimes slab soil-moisture induced movement, specifically slab "hogging", manifests as dimples in the cornice where trusses cross internal non-loadbearing walls. We typically take a laser level to all truss jobs so that if it proves that the middle of the truss is higher than the average heel heights, then that truss ain't sagging and there is probably nothing wrong with it.

INTERNAL ROOF INSPECTION

Once in the roof, the first – and continuous – job is to check that it is safe to be up there. If, for example, there are a series of bottom chords that have disconnected from the

webs at ejected plates, then it's better not to progress – try coming into the roof from another way if you can. I once got in a roof that had just been passed by council – saw the trusses were out of plumb by about 300mm – backed out quicker than if there were a skunk up there – and told the builder to evacuate!

So, once I can properly start investigating, my main tool is what can only be described as a Mark 1 eyeball. That is, I spend some quality time looking for signs of distress. If I can get a line on them, I'll look along the roof plane at the underside of the top chords and see if any truss is noticeably down. The next step is to systematically walk/crawl/climb/grovel through the roof and check out the trusses. At this stage a bright head torch, a dust mask, and lots of swearing tends to help.

The main signs I'm looking for are disconnected plates and bowed chords. If you see lots of adjacent trusses with one of these two symptoms then it's quite likely that the roof structure has already effectively failed and it's being held up by a combination of cornice glue and sheer luck!

I once inspected a failed structure in a church and remarked the fact that it was still standing was strong evidence that there actually is a God!

It's very rare that you will actually see a snapped piece of timber, but these, on occasion, do occur. A buckled web is probably a more common occurrence. Then there are the even less common issues – failed truss hangers, completely missing nailplates, widespread termite damage, or the air conditioning installer having cut webs. Hmmm, okay, that last one isn't actually that rare.

So that's basically the process. There's no magic involved and no secret engineering superpower. Most of the time it's just a matter of listening carefully, looking methodically, and doing the dirty work in the roof. The hard part isn't finding the evidence; it's getting out afterwards without insulation down your shirt, dust in the snoz, and a new vocabulary of exotic swear words. **T**



Paul Davis is an independent structural engineer managing his own consulting firm Project X Solutions Pty Ltd. The view in this column are Paul's professional opinion and may not necessarily reflect the opinion of *TTN*.
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112 x 112	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	Available upon request			
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